Wednesday, September 5, 2007 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 269 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

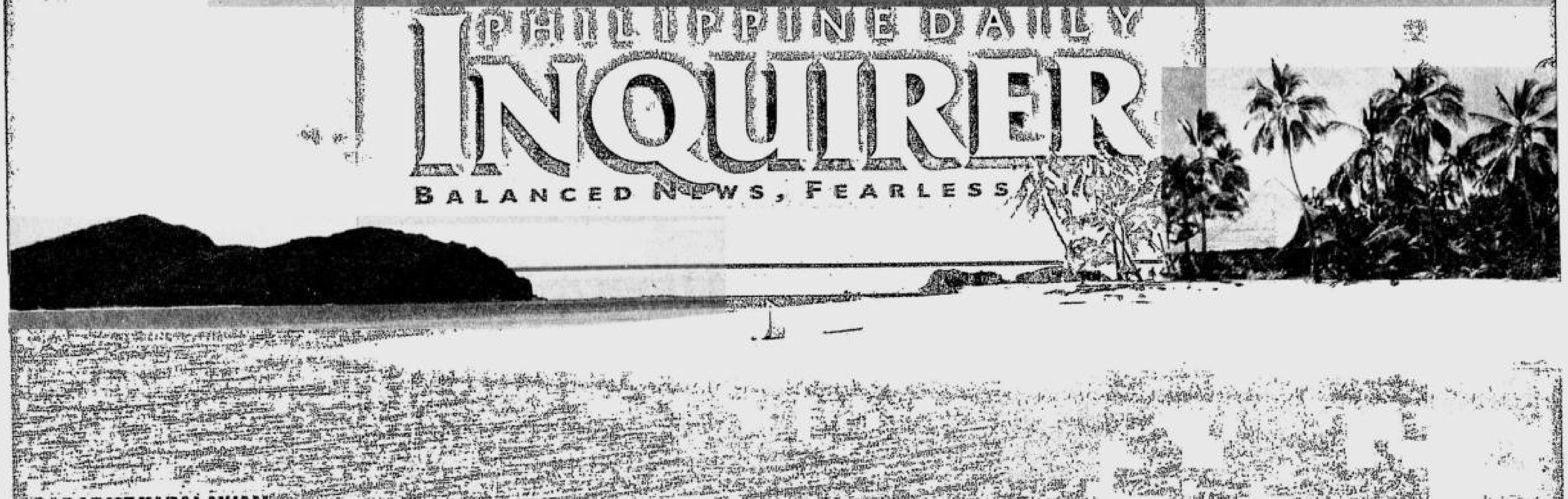
'Explore the exciting Pinoy gaming life in the first-ever issue of 2bU! Sports'
LIFESTYLE / C1

Federer, Roddick forge US Open quarterfinal duel
SPORTS / A26

Kobe Bryant is in Manila
LIFESTYLE / D1

P75-M project bleeds coffers of RP's biggest power co-op
ACROSS / A16

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS



PARADISE IN PALAWAN
Clear waters and powdery sands await visitors to the tiny island of Pangalusian in El Nido, Palawan. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Abalos impeachment eyed

Cabinet exec's testimony deemed crucial

By Christian V. Esguerra and Beverly T. Natividad

A GROUP OF LAWMAKERS IN THE House of Representatives has begun the groundwork for the filing of an impeachment complaint against Benjamin Abalos Sr., chair of the Commission on Elections accused of brokering the $329-million contract for the national broadband network (NBN) project won by China's ZTE Corp.

The lawmakers are considering the testimony of a Cabinet official who might be able to pin Abalos.

Deputy Minority Leader Risa Hontiveros yesterday said the lawmakers had started communicating with the Cabinet official, who was supposedly privy to the NBN deal.

"We will try to get this Cabinet official for the impeachment case we are building," said Hontiveros, representative of the party-list group Akbayan.

Hontiveros, the minority's spokesperson on

ABALOS/ A8

₱2 trillion worth of IT projects in the pipeline

By Tony S. Bergonia

THE CONTROVERSIAL NATIONAL BROADBAND Network (NBN) and Cyber Education Project (CEP) would sink the country deeper in debt because the government already owns other broadband networks and 31 information and communication technology (ICT) projects that have a combined cost of more than P2 trillion.

Most of the funds for the ongoing and proposed projects came or will come from foreign loans, a government listing showed.

Two of the projects are broadband networks that the government already owns—the Philip-

P2 TRILLION/ A8

YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING. President Macapagal-Arroyo appears incredulous as Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, holding a CD, murmurs a few private words to her at the start of the National Security Council Cabinet Group meeting in Malacañang on Tuesday. LYN RILLON

Top official confirms gov't eyeing Erap pardon

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

THE NEW POLITICAL ADVISER of President Macapagal-Arroyo thinks that a pardon for her disgraced predecessor is not farfetched.

Asked by the INQUIRER if a pardon was in the offing for ousted President Joseph Estrada, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said: "I think it's no secret that the President right now is seeking a greater national reconciliation. So the more we are able to bring everybody together, the better for everybody."

Puno's diplomatic response notwithstanding, Bro. Mike Velarde, head of the influential El Shaddai, criticized the government for what he described as the "overkill" in the preparations for the Sandiganbayan verdict in the plunder case against Estrada.

"The preparation of the government for the day of judgment is

TOP OFFICIAL / A17

SIDE DRAMA. Sen. Migz Zubiri greets Sen. Nene Pimentel and gets a pat on the cheek in return at the Bishops-Legislators caucus in Makati City on Tuesday. Zubiri defeated Pimentel's son for the 12th slot in the 2007 senatorial elections. In foreground is Sen. Loren Legarda.

Gov't seeking .5M hectares for agri-biz deal with China

By TJ Burgonio and Christian V. Esguerra

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN Reform yesterday announced that it was looking at 400,000 to 500,000 hectares of land for agribusiness development under a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed with China in January.

Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Narciso Nieto told reporters that the areas targeted were those that had

GOV'T SEEKING/ A4

GMA to bring top businessmen to Sydney

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO will leave tomorrow for Australia to join US President George W. Bush at the annual summit of the 21-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec).

Malacañang has not confirmed whether Ms Arroyo will have a meeting with Bush on the sidelines of the Apec summit in Sydney on Saturday and Sunday.

But such "pull-aside" meetings have been traditionally done by the heads of state gathered in one venue.

Ms Arroyo had earlier said she would meet with Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi during the Apec event to discuss the resumption of peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which Malaysia hosts.

The President, along with her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo, is scheduled to leave for Sydney tomorrow morning on a chartered flight. It will be Mike Arroyo's first overseas trip since he survived dangerous open heart surgery in April.

Key members of Ms Arroyo's Cabi-

GMA TO BRING/ A8

No fierce fighting, just fresh fruits in Sulu

ARLYN DE LA CRUZ

DURIAN sells for P10 apiece in downtown Jolo. In Metro Manila, it costs at least P120.

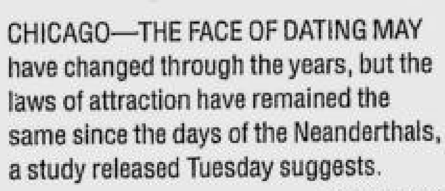
By Arlyn dela Cruz

JOLO, SULU—IN WHAT MAY BE A FIRST in the history of Sulu, a Philippine Air Force cargo plane won't be bringing in more soldiers for war or retrieve the bodies of soldiers slain in encounters with bandits.

On orders of President Macapagal-Arroyo, the C-130 will embark on a mission here on Sept. 10 to pick up farmers' produce in what Gov. Abdulsakur Tan described as a "symbolic act of humanitarian invasion."

"It is actually part of the implementation

NO FIERCE/ A4


BEAUTY AT WEALTH PA RIN ANG SUKATAN!

Men go for good looks; women pick security

CHICAGO—THE FACE OF DATING MAY have changed through the years, but the laws of attraction have remained the same since the days of the Neanderthals, a study released Tuesday suggests.

MEN GO/ A4

Beliefs, not money, behind Couples split

By Beverly T. Natividad

MONEY WAS NOT THE PRINCIPA cause of the split that wracked Co ples for Christ (CfC), one of th Catholic Church's largest lay movements worldwide, according to member of the CfC International Council.

Joe Tale, who also chairs Gawad

BELIEFS/ A17

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Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
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(All in exact order)

6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN
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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/09/04/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

Marine debacles to be probed

By Nikko Dizon

THE MILITARY HAS LAUNCHED an inquiry that would separately look into the deaths of Marine soldiers during clashes last July 10 and Aug. 18 in Basilan that left 29 Marines dead, including 10 who were beheaded, allegedly by Abu Sayyaf terrorists.

The inquiry will investigate possible errors in command that led to some of the Armed Forces' biggest losses in recent years, the new Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino told reporters yesterday.

"We have created two boards of inquiry to look into the recent encounters. The primary consideration here is that we will learn from our experience," Dolorfino said.

Dolorfino said the board that will investigate the ambush on July 10 that left 14 Marines dead, 10 of them beheaded, has already been created. It will be led by his chief of staff, Col. Eugenio Clement.

A second panel that will investigate a subsequent clash on Aug. 18 that left 16 soldiers dead, including five young lieutenants, has yet to be formed, he said.

The inquiry will look into how the Marines operated in the two encounters with the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Abu Sayyaf and determine the errors, lapses and failures that led to the high death toll.

Most of the ground officers involved have already been relieved of their posts, including the then Marine chief in the area. The panels are not expected to recommend that any charges be filed.

The two incidents were part of stepped-up military offensives against the Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim extremist group blamed for the country's worst terrorist attacks.

DOLORFINO LYN RILLON

On Aug. 9, 20 soldiers and a civilian were killed in a clash between soldiers and the Abu Sayyaf on Jolo island, south of Basilan.

The losses forced President Macapagal-Arroyo to launch a major offensive in Basilan and Jolo that has now displaced nearly 25,000 residents on Basilan alone.

The past week has seen a lull in the fighting, Dolorfino said, adding the military had been ordered to focus on "surgical" strikes that would not endanger civilians.

Dolorfino said he had instructed the troops to "be decisive in the conduct of our operations. Do not just push the enemy but corner them."

Dolorfino is set to fly to Basilan tomorrow to visit the four Marine battalions deployed there.

He said he was going to Basilan not just to check on the soldiers' morale but also "to give them guidance" to ensure that the Marines remains an organization that is "people-oriented, institutionally strong and operationally effective."

OIC prods RP, MNLF on 1996 peace accord

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE 57-MEMBER ORGANIZATION of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has urged the Philippine government, the Moro National Liberation Front and the OIC Committee of the Eight to find a way to remove the impediments to the full implementation of the peace accord signed in 1996 by the government and the MNLF.

In a statement on the occasion of the 11th anniversary of the accord's signing, the OIC also called for greater government effort in bringing peace and stability to the southern Philippines.

OIC secretary general Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu of Indonesia praised the government and the MNLF for signing the peace accord on Sept. 2, 1996, to end a 25-year-old conflict.

The agreement provided for the creation of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) that saw then MNLF chair Nur Misuari elected as its first governor.

Misuari, however, is now under house arrest facing rebellion charges for leading a short-lived uprising in Sulu in 2001 that claimed over 100 lives.

In the OIC statement, Ihsanoglu noted that "progress has not met the high expectations" from the time both parties signed the accord to implement the 1976 Tripoli Agreement.

The OIC is an influential intergovernmental organization that safeguards the interests of Muslim member-countries as well as individual Muslims all over the world. The MNLF enjoys observer status in the OIC.

Ihsanoglu said the OIC was ready to extend more assistance to address the underdevelopment and humanitarian issues in Mindanao.

But he also urged all the parties involved to "exert their outmost effort" in convening a tripartite meeting and preserving the gains made since the peace agreement was signed.

The OIC General Secretariat earlier directed the Committee of the Eight to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement and set a tripartite meeting among the Philippine government, the MNLF and OIC.

It said the meeting was postponed a few times because of the fighting in the southern Philippines. It said a new date for the meeting would be announced later.

JDV proposes Spratley's free-fishing corridor

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA HAS proposed the establishment of a free "fishing corridor" in waters around the contested Spratley Islands to avoid potential conflicts in the region.

The Speaker brought up the idea in a meeting on Monday with a high-level Chinese delegation led by Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan at the House of Representatives.

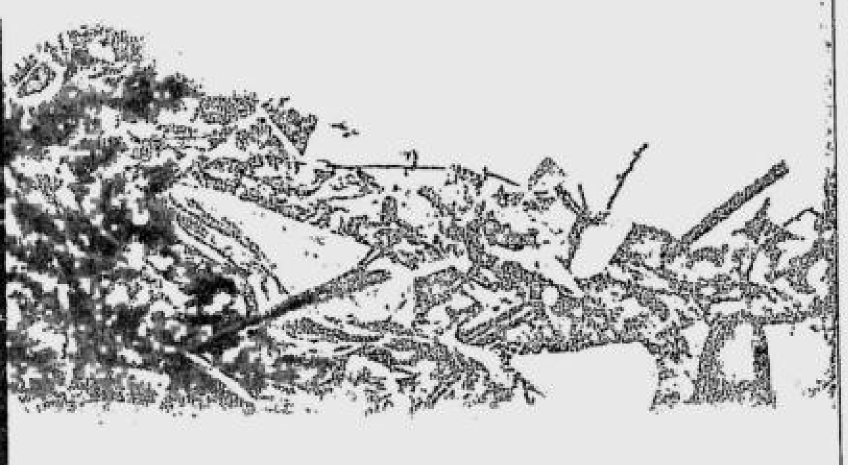
"A fisheries corridor would be a great step to prevent undue arrests of fishermen from Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and China that have created irritants and hindered regional harmony," De Venecia said in a statement yesterday

De Venecia said China's Defense Minister, Gen. Cao Gangchuan, was receptive to the idea.

The fishing zone in the South China Sea ranks fourth among the world's 19 fishing zones in terms of total annual maritime production, according to the Oslo-based International Peace Research Institute. *Norman Bordadora, Reuters*

'Salamat sa Desisyon ng Korte Suprema 13-0'

'Mas buo ang loob ng kabataan ng Smokey Mountain na ipaglaban ang kinabukasan'



Where escape is a natural recourse, the young leaders of Smokey Mountain opt to remain and work to see more improvements in their community.

Many of them have seen many key cities of the world. They have performed as a cultural dance group to raise funds for scholarships. Asked about their dreams, they hardly speak of leaving the country for better lives. They want to stay and see more progress at Smokey Mountain.

They want their community to be recognized as a Philippine showcase of transformation – from a community of dwellers who made a living out of a huge garbage dumpsite to one of dignified living, through self-help and perseverance. They want to be known for caring for people and the environment.

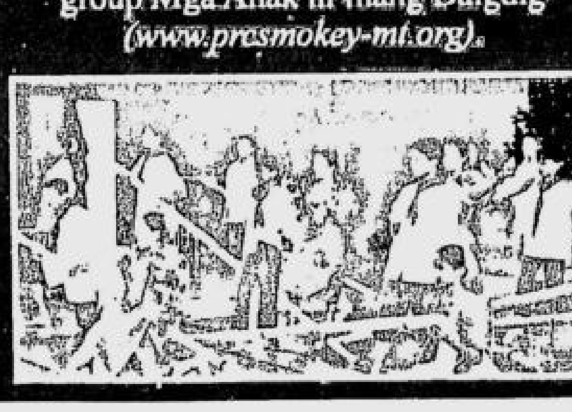
They see the recent **Supreme Court** decision, which upheld the validity of the **Smokey Mountain Reclamation and Development Project** that provided them permanent homes, as a propeller of dreams, a "bonus" for their efforts.

"Para sa akin, bonus na ang Supreme Court decision. Nakuha na namin ang tunay na halaga ng magkaroon ng sariling bahay, ng malinis na paligid (I regard the SC decision as a bonus. We have long realized the benefits of having our own homes and clean surroundings) ," states Andrew Macalalad, 28, Parish Youth Coordinator.

It has been nine years, starting from early 1999, since permanent homes in 21 medium-rise residential buildings were turned over to 2,520 families who were beneficiaries of the project undertaken by the **National Housing Authority** and **R-II Builders Inc.**

Andrew, who brought the Smokey Mountain stench with him to grade school, has been to Australia, US, Hong Kong and Japan with the cultural dance group and was 2006 representative to the APEC Youth Summit in Vietnam. As one of the first church scholars, he graduated with a degree in customs administration from the Philippine Maritime Institute. But he is not about to let go of community work. He still wants to see more youth volunteers give of their own selves for their community.

"Magtuloy-tuloy sana ang tulong para sa amin. Pero sana'y mas marami sa amin ang mamulat na kami talaga ang tutulong sa sarili namin. Pagsikapan ang edukasyon --pag may education, may unity sa aming lugar. Pag may unity, may progress ang community.
(I hope that help continues to flow in and that more of our youth realize that it is through their own efforts that their lives would improve) ," states Shirley Cotoner, 18. She adds she will continue to be guided by the discipline developed in her by the late National Artist for Dance Ramon Obusan who served as community volunteer and artist trainor for the dance group Mga Anak ni Inang Daigdig *(www.prcsmokey-mt.org).*



Salamat sa Korte Suprema!

Palace: No postponement of barangay, SK elections

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG IS OPPOSED to the postponement of barangay elections scheduled for October this year.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, who has been designated presidential political adviser, said postponing the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections would be illegal, as "you will now have SK chairmen who will be 25, 26, 27 years old, in violation of the law."

There have been no elections for the local council posts, which carry a term of three years, since 2002.

The House committee on suffrage and electoral reforms, chaired by Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin, on Monday unanimously approved a consolidated bill postponing the October 2007 simultaneous barangay and SK elections to the second Monday of May 2009. It was the first bill approved at the committee level by the 14th Congress.

Puno said Malacañang would be making representations with the different House committees that the executive branch was advising against postponement.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. said funding for the SK and barangay elections has already been provided for in the 2007 national budget.

Locsin said the consolidated measure was to be submitted yesterday to the committee on rules.

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*CAB Data July '06 - June '07

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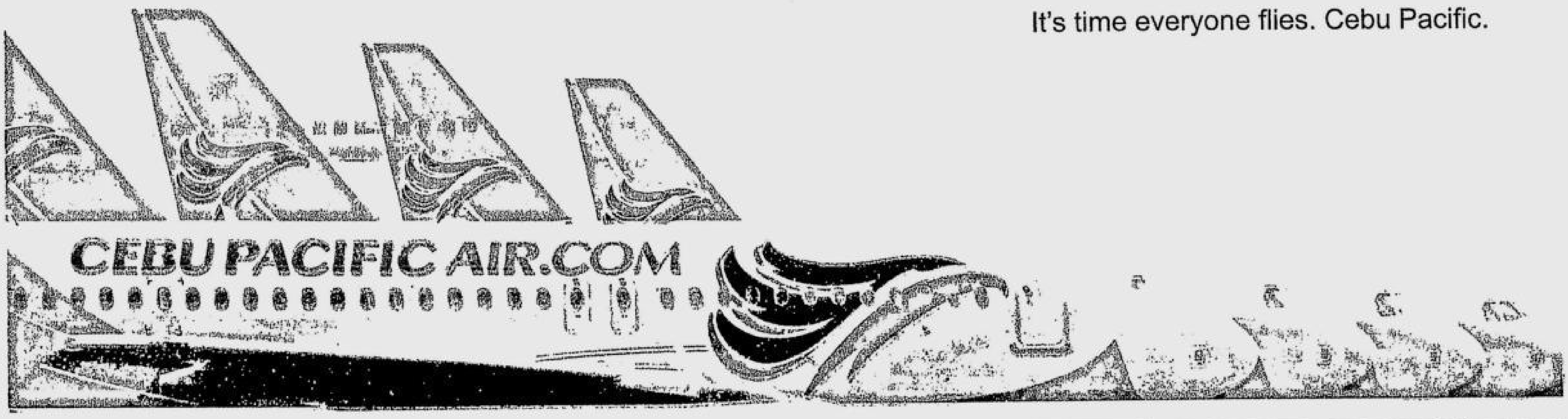

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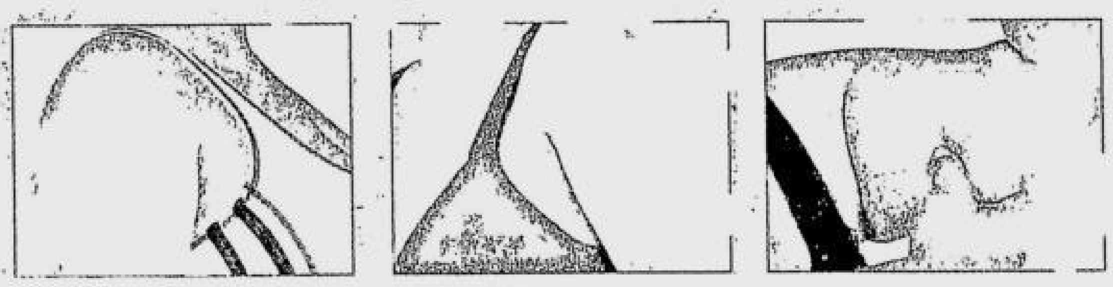

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Gov't seeking .5M hectares ...

From page A1

been distributed to tenant tillers under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) who have organized themselves into Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs).

Each ARC has about 100 to 200 members in one or several barangays. The idea is to be able to farm collectively, like a cooperative, and receive technical and financial assistance in the cultivation of the distributed land.

Over 1,700 ARCs have been organized nationwide, but very few of them are viable and those that are successful are receiving aid from the DAR, international financial agencies and donor governments, the biggest of which is Japan.

The ARCs are theoretically in the 4 million ha of farmland, half of them public land, distributed under CARP over the past two decades.

Around 1.3 million ha, half of them total sugarcane fields in Negros where resistance to agrarian reform is strongest, remain to be distributed under CARP's land distribution drive, which expires next year, unless the 20-year-old program is extended.

One MOU—or agreement in principle—signed in January calls for the development of over 1 million ha of land to grow hybrid corn, rice and sorghum. This MOU states that this land will be covered by a 25-year lease, renewable for another 25 years.

In the "whereas" clause, the MOU noted that Philippine government is "accelerating" the development of 2 million ha of new lands for agribusiness, saying that this is one of the strategic goals of the medium-term development plan of the Arroyo administration.

"We're just identifying ARCs as potential areas for agribusiness. But the farmers will have the final decision on this," Nieto said.

'National betrayal'

Last week, Steve Quiambao of the Philippine Ecumenical Action for Community Enlightenment (Peace) Foundation accused the government of "leasing" 2 million hectares of farm lands to the Chinese for agribusiness.

"It's an act of national betrayal," said Quiambao, declaring that this would compromise the nation's food security.

Asked for comment, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap told the INQUIRER: "I challenge anyone to show a contract saying that we're surrendering, leasing or giving away 2 million hectares to the Chinese."

But leftist groups are already up in arms, protesting the alleged "betrayal."

Around 300 protesters, demonstrating for a second straight day at the main DAR office in Quezon City, yesterday demanded that the DAR drop what it said was a plan to convert 600,000 ha of farmland into agribusiness and instead fully implement CARP; that Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman resign; and that three mid-level officials be sacked for handing down rulings on land disputes purportedly detrimental to farmers.

Congress probe urged

Around 120 of the protesters were invited to a conference in the DAR office, but after hours of discussions, they refused to leave, prompting officials to call the riot police to evict them.

Also yesterday, Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel of the leftist group Akbayan slammed the China deal, saying it smacked of the controversial Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement and the National Broadband Network project with China.

She said the deals with China "violate constitutional provisions" and that most of the Philippine corporations involved in the January MOUs were "nonexistent."

Baraquel filed a resolution calling for an investigation by Congress of the MOUs.

A FARMER LEADER cries in frustration as she leaves the Department of Agrarian Reform building in Quezon City after Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman failed to show up for a dialogue Tuesday.

RAFFY LERMA

ROBERT FLORES, a farmer of Hacienda Velez in Malaga, Negros Occidental, returns to picket outside the Department of Agrarian Reform on Elliptical Road in Quezon City on Tuesday. He was arrested and later released.

JOAN BONDOC

Men go for good looks; women ...

From page A1

Notwithstanding what they say they want in a mate, it seems that men still pick the most attractive women. Women, on the other hand, go for men who make the best providers—leveraging their looks to snag the best mate they can.

That is what a group of researchers found when they observed some modern singles at work—in a speed-dating session in Munich, Germany.

"Just because people say they're looking for a particular set of characteristics in a mate, someone like themselves, doesn't mean that is what they'll end up choosing," Peter M. Todd, a cognitive scientist at Indiana University in Bloomington, said in a telephone interview.

Researchers led by Todd reported in Tuesday's edition of Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that their study found humans were similar to most other mammals, "following Darwin's principle of choosy females and competitive males, even if human's say something different."

Munich study

The study undertaken by Todd and his team involved 26 men and 20 women in Munich, Germany.

The participants, whose ages ranged from 26 to their early 40s, were first asked to fill out a questionnaire about what they were looking for in a mate, listing such categories as wealth and status, family commitment, physical appearance, healthiness and attractiveness.

The participants said they were looking for mirror-images of themselves—someone who matched them in terms of status, commitment and looks.

The researchers, however, found a different dynamic at work when the participants were made to take part in "speed dating"—short meetings of three to seven minutes in which a man and a woman would chat, then move on to meet another member of the opposite sex.

Participants were later asked to check off the people they would like to meet again in a proper date. Dates were arranged between a man and a woman who had chosen each other.

Disparity

Speed dating allowed the researchers to look at a lot of mate choices in a short time. They were also able to compare what the participants said they were looking for with the people they actually chose to date again.

And what did the researchers find?

"There's this disparity between what people say they want in a mate and what they end up choosing," Todd said.

Men's choices did not reflect their stated preferences, the researchers concluded. The men appeared to choose the women they want to date again mostly on the basis of their physical attractiveness.

The men also appeared to be much less choosy. For a second date, the men tended to select nearly every woman above a certain minimum attractiveness threshold, Todd said.

Women's actual choices, like men's, did not reflect their stated preferences. The women appeared drawn to material wealth and security.

The women appeared much more calculating and picky in their choices of prospective mates than their male counterparts, the researchers found.

The women expressed an interest in seeing only a third of the men again, and they appeared to calibrate their choices based on how attractive they thought they were and who they could realistically expect to bag.

The scientists said women were aware of the importance of their own attractiveness to men, and adjusted their expectations to select the more desirable guys.

"Women made offers to men who had overall qualities that were on par with the women's self-rated attractiveness. They didn't greatly overshoot their attractiveness," Todd said, "because part of the goal for women is to choose men who would stay with them"

But, he added, "they didn't go lower. They knew what they could get and aimed for that level."

Biological drive

Results of the study suggest that modern-day singles, like generations of their ancestors, are driven by biology with men seeking the best specimens to procreate with and women seeking the best long-term partners.

"Evolutionary theories in psychology suggest that men and women should trade off different traits in each other, and when we look at the actual mate choices people make, this is what we find evidence for," Todd said.

"Ancestral individuals who made their mate choices in this way—women trading off their attractiveness for higher quality men and men looking for any attractive women who will accept them—would have had an evolutionary advantage in greater numbers of successful offspring." *Reports from AP and AFP*

No fierce fighting, just fresh fruits, in Sulu

From page A1

of Administrative Order No. 192 issued by the President ordering a humanitarian offensive in Basilan, Sulu and other areas under the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao," Tan told the INQUIRER.

AO 192 classifies the ARMM provinces—Sulu, Basilan, Maguindanao, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur and Shariff Kabunsuan—as "the poorest in the country."

Tan said the absence of any fresh encounters between the military and the Abu Sayyaf, as well as other rebel groups, had paved the way for the uninterrupted harvest of farmers.

Marketing problem

But one problem cropped up—where to market the bounty aside from nearby Zamboanga City.

Bringing the produce to Metro Manila on a C-130 plane, Tan explained, was an idea he picked up from a recent visit of Sen. Richard Gordon to Sulu.

The senator, he said, "urged him to actively market the fruits harvested in Sulu" by seeking the assistance of the Department of Trade and Industry.

Gordon, in an Aug. 20 letter to Ms Arroyo, made a formal recommendation. "The produce is very cheap and DTI can help market the products of Sulu at better prices," he said.

Cheap fruits

The streets of downtown Jolo are flooded by a seeming oversupply of durian, mangosteen and lanzones. A bunch of mangosteen that weighs almost two kilos costs only P7-P10. It costs more than P200 in Metro Manila.

Lanzones are sold in 5-kilo baskets at only P50. In Zamboanga, the same fruit is sold at P20-P30 a kilo.

Durian fruits stringed in threes can be bought at a bargain price of P15-P30, depending on size. In fruit stands in Greenhills, San Juan, and elsewhere in Metro Manila, they cost from P120 to P180 apiece.

Tan went to the DTI main office in Makati City to seek assistance in marketing the produce to be airlifted from Sulu by the C-130 plane.

The "humanitarian offensive" ordered by Ms Arroyo, according to the governor, indicated that she was not pursuing an all-out war in the province. Her parallel instruction to all Cabinet officials is an "all-out development offensive" in Sulu and Basilan.

"Finally, you in Metro Manila will get to taste just how sweet and delicious our durian, mangosteen and lanzones," he said.

DURIAN for sale in downtown Jolo

ARLYN DELA CRUZ

Correction

IN THE SEPT. 4 ISSUE, a photo caption on Page A2—"Get your jobs here"—misstated the designation of the person shown on the extreme right of the photograph. Enrique Nalus is the chief of the Makati/Pasay field office of the Department of Labor and Employment—not the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Car plates won't fit Jonas puzzle

By Alcuin Papa

POLICE INVESTIGATORS SAY they are puzzled over how the license plates of a vehicle allegedly used in the abduction of activist Jonas Burgos—later traced to a jeep parked inside a military camp—could suggest military involvement in the kidnapping when the evidence points to communist rebels as being responsible.

Senior Supt. Joel Coronel of the Criminal Investigation Detection Group (CIDG) said the testimony provided by Emerito Lipio, an admitted former New People's Army member, provided the most "logical and coherent" picture of the abduction.

"His statements are consistent with what other witnesses have told us before. We now know what Jonas was doing in the mall at the time he was abducted. He was there to meet with members of the movement," Coronel said yesterday.

He said investigators are trying to establish the link between the license plates and the statements of Lipio who testified that NPA members snatched Burgos from the Ever Gotesco mall in Fairview, Quezon City last April 28.

'Really puzzling'

Coronel said he found the license plates angle that tended to link the military to the Burgos abduction "really puzzling."

Earlier, police investigators traced the license plates (TAB-194) of a Toyota Revo used in the abduction to an Isuzu vehicle parked inside the headquarters of the 56th Infantry Battalion in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

Soldiers and officers from the military unit claimed the license plates had been stolen.

Last week, the CIDG presented Lipio to the media. Lipio claimed to have witnessed the kidnapping as he had been by an NPA leader named Delfin de Guzman to shadow Burgos who was suspected of appropriating party funds and working as a military spy.

He said he recognized two of Burgos' kidnappers as members of the NPA.

Marlon Manuel and Melissa Reyes, who were also presented to media, corroborated Lipio's statements.

In the search for more witnesses, Coronel said they would interview former members of the NPA, rebel returnees and sympathizers who might shed light on the case.

Reacting to statements made by Jonas' mother, Edita Burgos, that Lipio was being used to divert attention from the involvement of the military, Coronel said Lipio was neither coerced nor tortured to give his testimony.

On allegations that Lipio was under the custody of the military as he was arrested last year, Coronel said Lipio told him that he was released a day after his arrest and has been hiding out at his brother' house in Bicol.

On reports that De Guzman was arrested by the military late last year and remains in military custody, Coronel said that the Delfin de Guzman arrested last year was actually Rafael Cruz alias Ka Boy, Ka Brando and Ka Bong, former chief of the CPP in Bulacan.

GMA set to match Marcos record on infra

By Michael Lim Ubac

BY THE TIME PRESident Macapagal-Arroyo steps down in 2010, her administration's infrastructure spending could rival the record of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos' New Society.

With the country's economy growing at its fastest annual pace in 20 years, the President on Monday vowed to build more roads, repair dams and complete other infrastructure projects that would put the country on the road to First World status.

The 20-year Marcos administration carried out the most extensive infrastructure program ever launched, financed by deficit spending and foreign borrowing.

Ms Arroyo said her administration would pour more money—P13 billion—to boost the agricultural sector.

In a speech at the inauguration of the Aulo Irrigation Project in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, the President said P8 billion would primarily go to irrigation and another P5 billion for the construction of farm-to-market roads next year.

She said that she had already asked Congress to increase the budget of the agriculture department, so that it can build 3,000 km of rural roads and repair irrigation systems to benefit 1,000 farmlands.

"*Kadalasan di lumalabas sa* media *ang ganitong mga biyayang nararandaman ng karaniwang magsasaka. Kaya naman narito [kami] upang talakayin ang mga programa at biyaya ng patubig at kalsadang bukid* (Benefits like this for the farmer are not usually covered by media. This is why we are here to discuss the benefits of projects like irrigation and the building of rural roads)," Ms Arroyo said.

She said that due to the economic reforms she had instituted, the government had enough funds to allow the benefits of a strong economy trickle down to millions of Filipinos.

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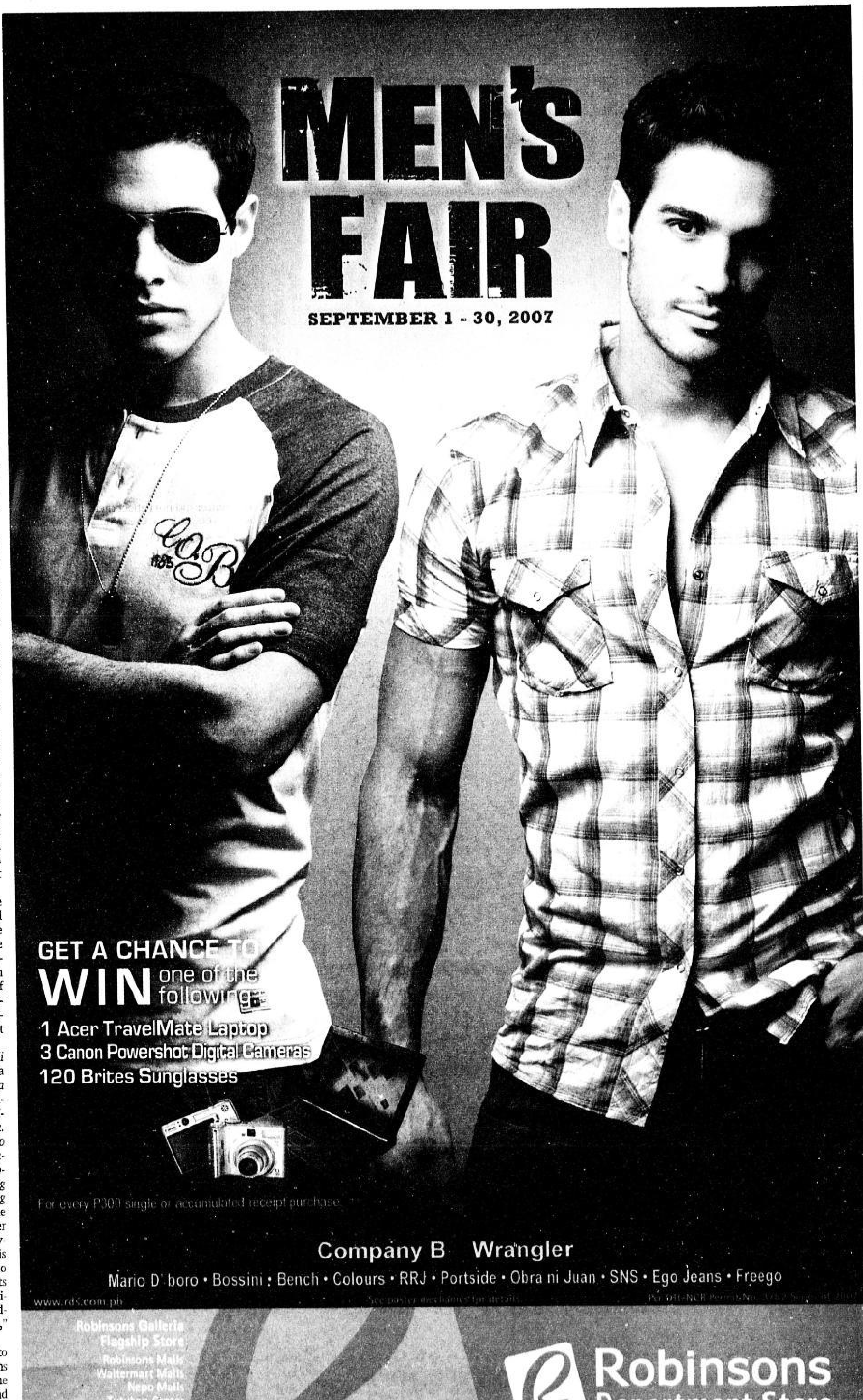

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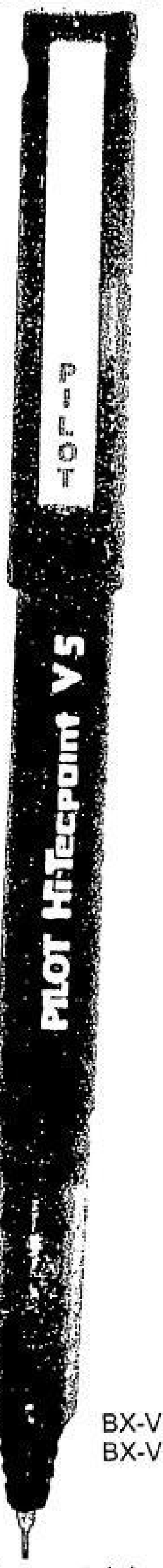

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SC reverses itself, clears ex-Piatco exec

By Leila B. Salaverria

REVERSING ITS EARLIER RULING, THE Supreme Court has ordered the dismissal of the graft case against the former chair and president of Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco) in connection with the voided contract to build Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

The high tribunal, in directing the Sandiganbayan to withdraw the criminal case, said Henry Go was charged under the wrong provision of the Antigraft and Corrupt Practices Act or Republic Act No. 3019.

Go and former Transportation and Communications Secretary Vicente Rivera were accused of conspiring with one another to enter into a questionable contract for the construction of Naia Terminal 3, which was subsequently nullified by the Supreme Court for being disadvantageous to the government.

The case against Go was filed by Asia's Emerging Dragons Corp., one of the firms that lost the bid to build the terminal.

The high court, in an April 13 decision, had dismissed Go's petition seeking a reversal of the Sandiganbayan ruling that junked his motion to quash the graft case against him.

Go then filed a motion for reconsideration, which was granted on Sept. 3.

In its resolution, the court pointed out that Go was charged with violating Section 3(g) of RA 3019, which penalizes public officials who enter into contracts disadvantageous to the government.

It said the provision applied only to public officials, and Go should have been charged under another provision that penalizes private individuals who get public officials to enter into grossly disadvantageous contracts.

"In other words, notwithstanding the allegation of a conspiracy to violate Section 3(g), the liability of private individuals who participated in the transaction must be established under the appropriate provision which is Section 4(b), for knowingly inducing or causing the public officials to commit Section 3(g) where criminal intent must necessarily be proved," the high court said.

Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago penned the resolution for the Special Third Division. Justices Adolfo Azcuna and Cancio Garcia concurred with it. Justices Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez and Minita Chico-Nazario dissented. Santiago had dissented with the April 13 decision, which was written by Justice Romeo Callejo who has since retired.

The Supreme Court said that in ordering the dismissal of the graft case against Go, it was not ruling on his guilt or innocence or prescribing the case, since RA 3019 penalizes private individuals under Section 4.

"It is well-settled that penal statutes are strictly construed against the State and liberally for the accused, so much so that the scope of a penal statute cannot be extended by good intention or by implication," the court said.

In her dissenting opinion, Martinez said private individuals could still be charged under Section 3 of the antigraft law as laid down in earlier cases.

"The Court had consistently held that private individuals, when conspiring with public officials, may be found guilty of offenses under Section 3, even though one of the elements of the offense is that the accused is a public officer," she said.

High court junks Erap plea to cite gov for contempt

By Leila B. Salaverria

EVARDONE

THE SUPREME COURT HAS dismissed the petition of deposed President Joseph Estrada and the Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) party to cite Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone for indirect contempt for saying that retired Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban would run with the opposition for a Senate seat in the May 2007 polls.

According to the high court, there was nothing contemptuous in Evardone's statement, published in the INQUIRER, even if it was uttered after the high court junked the government-backed petition for a people's initiative for charter change.

Estrada and the PMP alleged that Evardone's statement gave the message that the decision on the people's initiative case was tainted with political motives.

Evardone, together with Raul Lambino, was a prime mover of the charter change bid, which the court rejected as a "grand deception" and "gigantic fraud."

According to the petitioners, Evardone's statement tainted Panganiban's integrity and publicly humiliated the justices, which was why the governor should be sanctioned to preserve the high court's integrity and to teach him a lesson in good manners and right conduct.

But the high court said the power to cite people for contempt should be used carefully, and should not be used for retaliation or vindication.

"Being a drastic and extraordinary remedy, the power of contempt should not be exercised unless clearly necessary in the interest of justice," it said.

The court gave weight to Evardone's explanation that he was either misquoted or his statements taken out of context. He also said he only mentioned the possibility of Panganiban joining the legislative branch after his retirement since there has been talk of this, and that he had no ill motive against Panganiban and respected the high court's ruling.

It also pointed out that Evardone's words about Panganiban's plans were speculations or personal observations and were based on a precedent not derogatory as to warrant penalty.

The court ruled that Evardone's remarks did not cast doubt on the integrity of the court.

It added that since Panganiban did not seek an elective post, the petition had become moot and academic.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, September 5, 2006
22nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1:1-8
Gospel: Luke 4:38-44

Leaving the synagogue, Jesus went to the house of Simon. His mother-in-law was suffering from high fever and they asked him to do something for her. Bending over her, he rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and waited on them.

At sunset, people suffering from many kinds of sickness were brought to Jesus. Laying his hands on each one, he healed them. Demons were driven out, howling as they departed from their victims, "You are the Son of God!" He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, for they knew he was the Messiah.

Jesus left at daybreak and looked for a solitary place. People went out in search of him and, finding him, they tried to dissuade him from leaving. But he said, "I have to go to other towns to announce the good news of the kingdom of God. That is what I was sent to do." So Jesus continued to preach in the synagogues of the Jewish country.

Commentary

Paul begins each of his pastoral letters with a hymn to the Father, Son, and Spirit—the Trinity. This is prayer that was developing along with the practice of the teachings of the apostles (which was the teaching of Jesus that was eventually written down in the four gospels). They are letters, with details of people who bring news from the communities to Paul as he travels. They must always be seen in light of the Word—as effects brought forth in the lives of those who sought to obey Jesus' words.

Jesus leaves the public place of prayer and goes to his disciples' house and is told of Peter's mother-in-law's illness. He goes to her immediately, grasping her and pulling her up to life. And she responds by waiting on them (deacon description). Where do we go after public prayer? Do we immediately go as Church to visit those who are sick, dying and in need in our homes and communities? What he did for her, he will do for everyone when it is requested and sometimes without being asked. Jesus came for healing and holiness, for justice and reconciliation, for peace with God and among us all.

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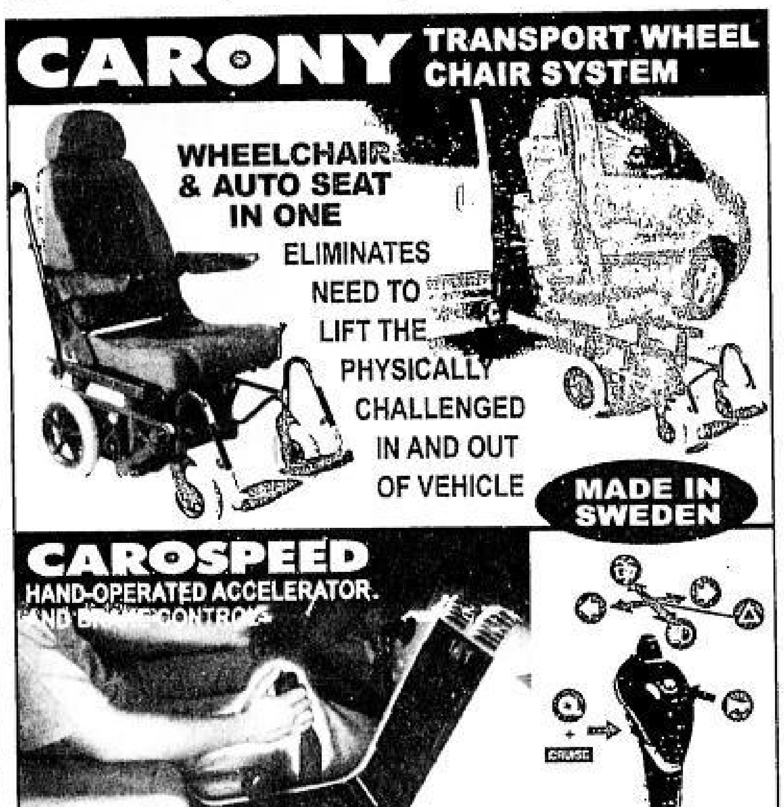

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Japanese fertilizer aid arrives

By Cynthia D. Balana

JAPAN HAS PROVIDED SHIPMENTS OF 15,607 metric tons of fertilizers worth P125 million to the Philippines under the 30th Japan Grant Assistance for Underprivileged Farmers Program (formerly 2KR or Japan's Increased Food Production Program).

These farm inputs will be distributed to poor farmer-beneficiaries in selected nine provinces by the Department of Agriculture through the National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC).

The final shipment carrying 5,000 metric tons of fertilizers arrived in the port of Iloilo on Aug. 28. A ceremony for the formal turnover of the fertilizers will be held on Sept. 6 at 9 a.m. at the port of Iloilo between officials of the Japanese embassy in Manila and the Department of Agriculture.

According to the embassy, the first shipment of 5,607 metric tons of fertilizers arrived in Seafront, Mariveles, Bataan, on July 24 this year. This initial batch of fertilizers will be offered for bidding and distribution to selected farmers whose landholdings are two hectares and below in the provinces of Isabela, Cagayan and Nueva Ecija.

Writing workshop

WRITE LIKE A STORYTELLER. YOUR PROposal has to be unique. An advocacy piece must not only bite but must make demands. After you've presented the problem, offer a solution.

Museum director, environmental advocate and writer John Silva is at it again.

Silva is set to hold grant writing and advocacy writing workshops on Sept. 11 and 12, respectively.

As an introduction to his courses, he gave the tips in the opening paragraph.

"These tips on effective writing have helped me get the grants I needed and pushed the causes I support," he said in a letter to friends and supporters.

Reservations may be made by calling or texting Silva at 0926-729-9029 or e-mailing him at jsilva79@mac.com

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Abalos impeachment eyed

From page A1

the impeachment issue, declined to identify the official.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves has acknowledged that he had met with ZTE executives twice—at his home in Ayala Alabang last year and at the Wack Wack Golf Club in Mandaluyong City a few months ago. Abalos, he said, was present on both occasions.

Hontiveros said opposition lawmakers were giving themselves a "reasonable timetable" of two weeks to a month to build the case.

The Cabinet official was among several people identified at a minority caucus Monday afternoon as possible sources who could deliver the goods against the Comelec chair.

Hontiveros said these people could either serve as primary sources or could lead them to more information on Abalos' alleged involvement in the controversial deal.

"It is a work in progress," she said. "We are looking for high-quality documentary evidence."

The chair and commissioners of the Comelec can be removed only through the impeachment process. An impeachment complaint must get at least one-third or 79 votes in the House so it could be forwarded to the Senate for trial.

A businessman said he was willing to testify in any investigation against Abalos that the Comelec chair offered Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, an executive of Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI), a bribe to withdraw its bid for the NBN project.

The businessman said the bribe would have come from the overprice of the project, which is envisioned to establish a seamless connectivity of landline, cellular and Internet services among all national government agencies and offices.

Big one and little one

Aside from Abalos, at least two influential personalities—"the Big One and the Little One"—had taken a slice of the kickbacks from the ZTE contract, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said yesterday.

"A total of $68 million was supposed to bankroll the May 14 midterm elections and $85 million [was to go] to the Big One and the Little One and the overprice balance to some equally corrupt DOTC officials and the rest of the usual boys," said Lacson, who refused to identify the alleged recipients.

Trips and trysts

The House is scheduled to investigate the deal after Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla said in a privilege speech last week that Abalos helped ZTE win the $329-million deal. Padilla claimed that the contract was overpriced.

The lawmaker also claimed that ZTE paid for the trips of Abalos to China and his trysts with Chinese women.

The Comelec chair earlier said he could not have brokered the deal because he was not powerful enough to do that. But he admitted that he accepted free trips to China from ZTE officials who, he said, had become his golf buddies.

Come out

Abalos yesterday asked his accuser to come out in the open before he answers the allegation that he tried to bribe De Venecia.

"Unless this man comes out, I'm sorry, I cannot talk about him. Let us not glorify this so-called unnamed source. How can you answer unnamed sources? Let this unnamed source come out before I glorify that," Abalos told reporters.

He said that if the accuser was De Venecia himself then he would answer the accusation.

"But he [De Venecia III] was not the one who said that. Was he the one who said that? If he was the one, I will answer that," he said.

ZTE on Monday said it did not enjoy undue advantage over AHI and the US firm Arescom in winning the NBN contract.

Reform bloc

Hontiveros said members of the so-called "reform bloc" in the House had been informed about the minority's plan to file an impeachment complaint against Abalos.

"To their mind, the pieces of evidence we have are not yet enough to pursue an impeachment case," she said. "But they are not closing their door on it."

At the minority caucus, Hontiveros said lawyers in the opposition bloc noted that the impeachment complaint against Abalos should involve pieces of evidence "of greater volume and quality" than those in ordinary cases.

"At this point, we believe that the allegations are very serious," she said. "If they constitute an impeachable offense as the days unfold, it will be our legislative duty to build a strong impeachment case."

But the planned complaint would not be limited to Abalos' purported complicity in the ZTE deal, the lawmaker said.

She said a secondary ground would be the Comelec's alleged "systematic and repeated election offenses" under Abalos' watch.

She cited purportedly widespread cheating during the 2004 elections marked by the "Hello Garci" controversy, and the case of Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol.

Hontiveros earlier criticized the six-month jail term that the Comelec had imposed on Bedol. He was found guilty of indirect contempt for failing to show up at Comelec investigations of alleged irregularities in his area of jurisdiction last May.

"Ironically, Abalos might be impeached because of the ZTE deal," she said. "But we will put on record the many election offenses he has committed."

In the Upper Chamber, Senate President Manuel Villar said canceling the ZTE contract was the "proper action" to take.

"There are many things which need to be explained, many personalities involved concerning a huge amount, and we could not even justify why we need to borrow a substantial sum when specifics have not been set," he said.

Sen. Francis Escudero said the contract was "unpopular, dirty and stinking."

A lawyer of AHI, the Filipino firm that came up with the unsolicited proposal for an NBN, said the company would address the alleged $10-million bribery attempt by Abalos in a congressional inquiry.

Marinelle O'Santos said AHI was offended when the deal was awarded to ZTE despite its superior proposal for a national broadband project in terms of both cost and technology. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Norman Bordadora*

P2 trillion worth of IT projects in the pipeline

From page A1

pine Administrative Network Project (PANP) and the Philippine Research, Education and Government Information Network (Preginet).

The 31 ongoing and proposed ICT projects, plus the two existing government broadband networks, are the precursors of the NBN that would add about P15 billion to the more than P2 trillion that was already spent and would be spent on the government's ICT projects.

Aside from the P15 billion that the Philippine government would borrow from China for the NBN, which was awarded to Chinese firm ZTE, another P23 billion would be borrowed from China for the Department of Education's CEP.

Huawei

The CEP was likely to be handed to ZTE's competitor, Huawei, also a Chinese firm.

Two UP economics professors, Raul V. Fabella and Emmanuel de Dios, said in a paper that it defied logic for government to own one broadband network, much less two.

Their paper was unable to study the implications of government having actually four broadband networks.

The PANP, also known as the French Protocol because it was built through more than P400 million in loans from the French government, was supposed to modernize the government's news and information network.

The Office of the Press Secretary is its implementing arm.

The French Protocol was a satellite-based system that was meant to connect all offices of the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), the News and Information Bureau (NIB) and the Bureau of Broadcast Services (BBS) to enable them to transmit data, text and video faster.

But high costs of satellite technology and lack of funds have transformed pieces of equipment that were bought for the PANP into dust magnets, according to Malacañang officials who had first-hand knowledge of the French Protocol.

Preginet's funding is listed at P5.2 billion, which was borrowed from the Japanese government through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the implementing arm of Preginet, said on its website that Preginet was a "nationwide broadband network that interconnects academic institutions, government offices and R&D (research and development) centers in the Philippines."

In June 2000, the DOST gave Preginet P24 million to start the first year of a "high performance research and education network."

"Preginet lets users efficiently transmit and receive large amounts of data nationwide and integrates some existing government information networks into a common network backbone," said the Preginet website.

The project listing, which was attached as annexes to the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) for 2004-2010, showed that some of the big-ticket projects computerizing government offices were done through build-operate-transfer (BOT) schemes.

Bizarre turnaround

BOT schemes applied to ICT projects made a lot of sense, according to the paper of Fabella and De Dios.

"Indeed, they seemed to draw and build upon the logic and success of past privatizations, which had either brought in revenue, promoted efficiency, better service, or both," said the paper.

It came as a bizarre turnaround, the paper said, when the government did not resort to the BOT scheme for the NBN and CEP, two projects that the government didn't need to own, in the first place.

Some of the projects listed in the MTPDP were utter failures, like the modernization of the electoral process under the Commission on Elections.

The MTPDP listed a P12-billion budget for the Comelec project that has turned out to be just a waste of public funds.

The project never took off, but hundreds of millions of pesos had already been withdrawn from government coffers for a computer contract that was declared invalid by the Supreme Court.

The computers are currently kept in a Comelec-rented warehouse in Manila.

Machine-readable passports

Another computerization project was for the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) that sought to replace hand-manufactured passports and visas with machine readable ones.

It cost P2 billion under a BOT project that has a life span of 10 years. The DFA has recently started issuing machine-readable passports.

Yet another computerization project was for the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to establish a "wide area network that will link all DOLE offices."

Part of the project was to develop a Labor Market Information System, or a computerized listing of job openings.

The DOLE ICT project was conceptualized in 1997 but its implementation started in 1998 and would take at least P100 million in government funds to complete.

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has its own computerization program, one that is now drawing flak for delaying the release of government workers' salary loans and pensions.

The 10-year computerization project of the Land Transportation Office was one of the biggest items on the MTPDP list. It cost P3.4 billion through a BOT contract and is a component of a bigger National Information Technology Plan for the 21st Century, or IT21, project to rev up the country's IT sector at an estimated cost of $49.7 billion, or almost P2 trillion.

It was supposed to accelerate the issuance of drivers' licenses and other motor vehicle documents, but queues are still long in many LTO branches.

Birth certificates

The National Statistics Office, that is more popularly known as the agency that issues copies of birth certificates, was the beneficiary of a P2.1-billion BOT project to computerize its operations and speed up the processing of documents.

A computerization project of the Bureau of Internal Revenue was listed as having a budget of P4.4 billion.

Another broadband-related project was for the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) to administer the interconnection of 100 state universities and colleges (SUCs) through local-area networks (LAN) and wide-area networks (WAN).

LAN is a system that links computers together in a small area, like offices or buildings. WAN is the same system applied to a larger area like a town, province or an entire country.

The CHEd project has a listed cost of P1.5 billion and a completion period of three years.

Telepono sa Barangay

Under the MTPDP, the Department of Transportation and Communications was to carry out a P62.7-billion "alternative communication program."

This, according to the MTPDP annexes, "shall serve as an alternative to the Municipal Telephone Program (MTP) and the Telepono sa Barangay."

It was to install "telecenters in every municipality and public pay phones accessible to all barangays."

The government had already spent P1.5 billion of loans from Canada for the MTP that installed 2,460 telephone lines in 246 villages in the provinces of Quezon, Negros Oriental, Lanao del Norte, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Nueva Vizcaya and Misamis Occidental.

But the lines are now dead and the MTP fell apart as the use of cellular phones became more common.

Too poor to pay

It also proved to be a losing financial venture because most of the lines were installed in areas where poverty was so pervasive that people could barely afford three meals a day, much less pay for phone calls.

"Technology overran it (MTP)," said one official who took part in implementing the MTP.

"These guys working on the NBN and CEP should learn lessons from this (MTP)," said the official. "It's Waste of Funds 101, but the lessons never sink in. It's as if money grew on trees."

Boao Forum

Malacañang officials, who helped prepare the MTPDP but declined to be identified for lack of clearance to talk from higher officials, said the listing of ongoing and proposed ICT projects in the government's six-year development plan indicated "an aggressive push for IT (information technology) projects."

It was an aggressive stance that President Macapagal- Arroyo herself announced in a speech at the Boao Forum in Boao, China, shortly before she witnessed the signing of the NBN deal with ZTE on April 21, 2007.

"In the Philippines, we are investing aggressively in the IT backbone," said Ms Arroyo in the speech. "We are bringing the Internet to every high school."

It wasn't clear whether, at the time Ms Arroyo said those words, her administration had already outlined what it wanted in terms of ICT projects other than to connect all government offices through a broadband network and all public high schools to the Internet.

Written by President

But in a portion in the MTPDP dealing with ICT projects that Malacañang officials said Ms Arroyo herself wrote, the President was well aware of what the problem in the ICT area was—the lack of private sector participation.

"The absence of clear and concise policies allowing innovative and more efficient services at lower costs has discouraged the entry of new players and further investments in the (ICT) sector," Ms Arroyo wrote in a situationer on Digital Infrastructure in the MTPDP.

"Clearly, there is need to sustain the momentum already gained toward the building of a digital infrastructure," she wrote in the ICT section of the MTPDP shortly after the May 2004 elections.

"Hence, efforts in pursuit of this goal will be further accelerated with the private sector playing a major role in these efforts," she said.

Her officials were to come under fire three years after she wrote those words for entering into a government-to-government deal with China for the NBN, a broadband network that would have no private sector participation.

GMA to bring top businessmen to Sydney

From page A1

net and the country's biggest names in business will join the trip.

Listed as Philippine delegates to the Apec 2007 Business Summit were Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco and Ramon Ang, chair and president and chief executive officer of San Miguel Corp., respectively; Jose Cuisia Jr., president and CEO of Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co.; Benjamin Philip Romualdez, president and CEO of Benguet Corp.; Teresita Sy-Coson, vice chair of SM Investments, and Jesus Tambunting, chair and CEO of Planter's Development Bank.

Roberto Romulo, chair of Philam Insurance Inc., and Doris Magsaysay-Ho, president and CEO of Magsaysay Group of Companies, are also attending as members of the Apec Business Advisory Council.

Australian Ambassador to the Philippines Tony Hely said Ms Arroyo decided to make a state visit to Australia earlier because she knew that Australia would have a very busy schedule hosting the Apec leaders during the summit.

Hely said that aside from attending the Apec summit, Bush would be making a state visit to Australia.

Tight security

In a briefing for the Philippine media, Hely said security in Sydney would be extremely tight because of the presence of Bush. He said the Iraq War was "not exactly popular" in his country and demonstrations were expected to greet Bush.

Hely said large sections of Sydney would be locked down to secure Bush and the other Apec leaders.

A 10-foot wall dubbed the "ring of steel" has been put up around Sydney's main tourist center near the world-famous Sydney Opera House where some of the meetings would take place.

Hely said the Apec leaders were expected to tackle the issues of disaster preparedness, the Avian influenza, sustainable development and climate change, terrorism and human security.

Apec groups Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, United States and Vietnam. The Apec is the pre-eminent forum established in 1989 to facilitate economic growth and progress in the Pacific rim nations.

'Sustainable future'

Together, the Apec economies represent over 40 percent of the world's population or about 2.6 billion people, and 56 percent of global GDP and around 48 percent of world trade.

The Apec summit is the culmination of a weeklong series of meetings, to be attended by the 21 world leaders, over 40 ministers, 400 international business leaders, more than 6,000 delegates and support personnel. It will be covered by more than 1,000 members of the media.

Apec 2007 adopted the theme: Strengthening our community and building a sustainable future."

At the end of their two-day retreat, the leaders will issue the Apec Economic Leaders Declaration which will contain the strategic direction for Apec next year. The 21 leaders will have their group photo garbed in the host country's traditional or chosen attire.

Strong message

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo yesterday said the Philippines would send a "clear and strong message" to Apec about its long-term economic achievements and preparedness to compete economically on a global scale.

"Our message to Australia and the world is: the Philippines means business; our growth will be sustained; we are here for the long term. It is time the world takes notice," Romulo said in his departure statement.

"Our fiscal and economic reforms have taken root and are showing concrete results: Our 2007 second quarter economic growth is the fastest in two decades; we have had consecutive quarterly growth since 2001," he stressed. *With a report from Cynthia D. Balana*

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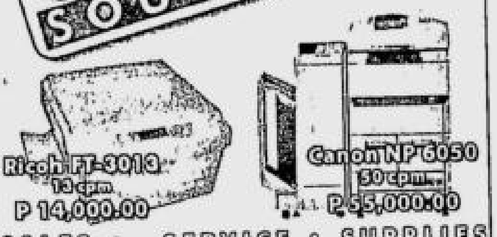

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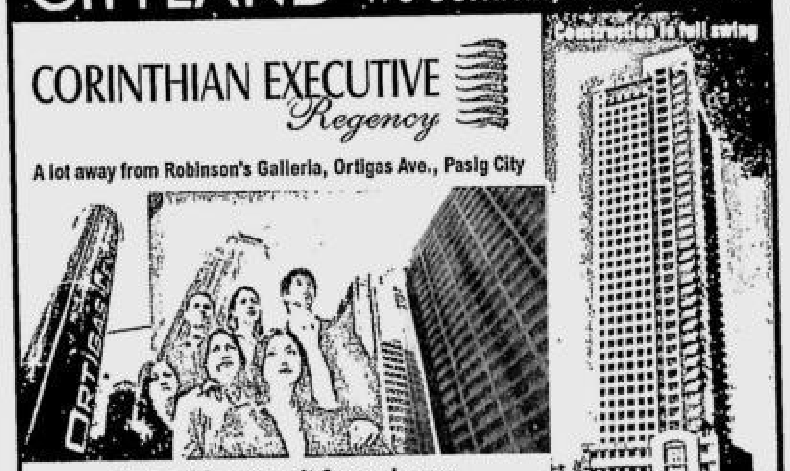

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  September 17 - 28, 2007 M-W-F 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- EFFECTIVE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION
  September 17 - 28, 2007 M-W-F 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- DYNAMICS OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
  September 18 - 27, 2007 T-TH 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- CREATIVE SALESMANSHIP AND CLIENT RELATIONS
  September 18 - 27, 2007 T-TH 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES
  September 18 - 27, 2007 T-TH 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- ACCOUNTING FOR NON-ACCOUNTANTS
  September 15 - October 13, 2007 Saturday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- PROJECT FEASIBILITY STUDIES
  September 15 - October 6, 2007 Saturday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING
  September 15 - October 6, 2007 Saturday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- EFFECTIVE PEST MANAGEMENT
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- ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING FOR MGRS. & SUPERVISORS
  September 15, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- WRITING THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING
  September 15, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE
  September 22 - October 6, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT
  September 22 - October 6, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL CONTROL
  September 22 - October 6, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
  September 28, 2007 Friday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- MOTIVATION: WAY TO GET MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE
  September 24, 2007 Monday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- GRIEVANCE HANDLING
  September 25, 2007 Tuesday 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- HOW TO DETECT & PREVENT FRAUDS IN WAREHOUSING
  September 29, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- CASH MANAGEMENT
  September 29, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- ORGANIZING A TRAINING PROGRAM
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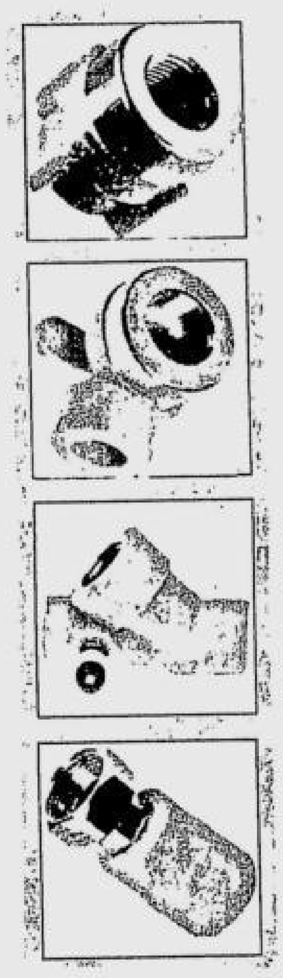

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	Bgy Baesa, Quezon City	Zeny Marcos	Operations Manager	362-9709; 09262426307
	Bgy. Capri, Quezon City	Arnaldo Caldo	Bgy Captain	09186172178
		Pedro de Jesus	Operational Manager	939-2651
	Bgy. Holy Spirit	Chito Valmocina	Bgy Captain	
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	Bgy Tuktukan	Elizabeth Ramos	Operations Manager	09164249180, 6281909
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Media guidelines set for Estrada verdict

By Jocelyn R. Uy

IN A SIGN THAT A VERDICT IS DUE ANYTIME now on the six-year-old plunder case of detained former president Joseph Estrada, the Sandiganbayan Sheriff's office yesterday notified the media that guidelines will be set on the news coverage of the historic event.

Sandiganbayan Sheriff Ed Urieta, however, said no date has been set for the promulgation but his office would finalize by Friday a list of do's and don'ts for the media during the promulgation.

"These guidelines will be coming from the justices and we will know these rules by Friday," Urieta told the INQUIRER.

Urieta said in a memorandum issued by the Supreme Court, live coverage of the promulgation was prohibited, meaning no video cameras shall be allowed in the court room.

However, reporters will be allowed inside the court room but will be prohibited from bringing in cameras, tape recorders and cellular phones.

"These are just proposals and we will polish the rules in the next three days," Urieta said.

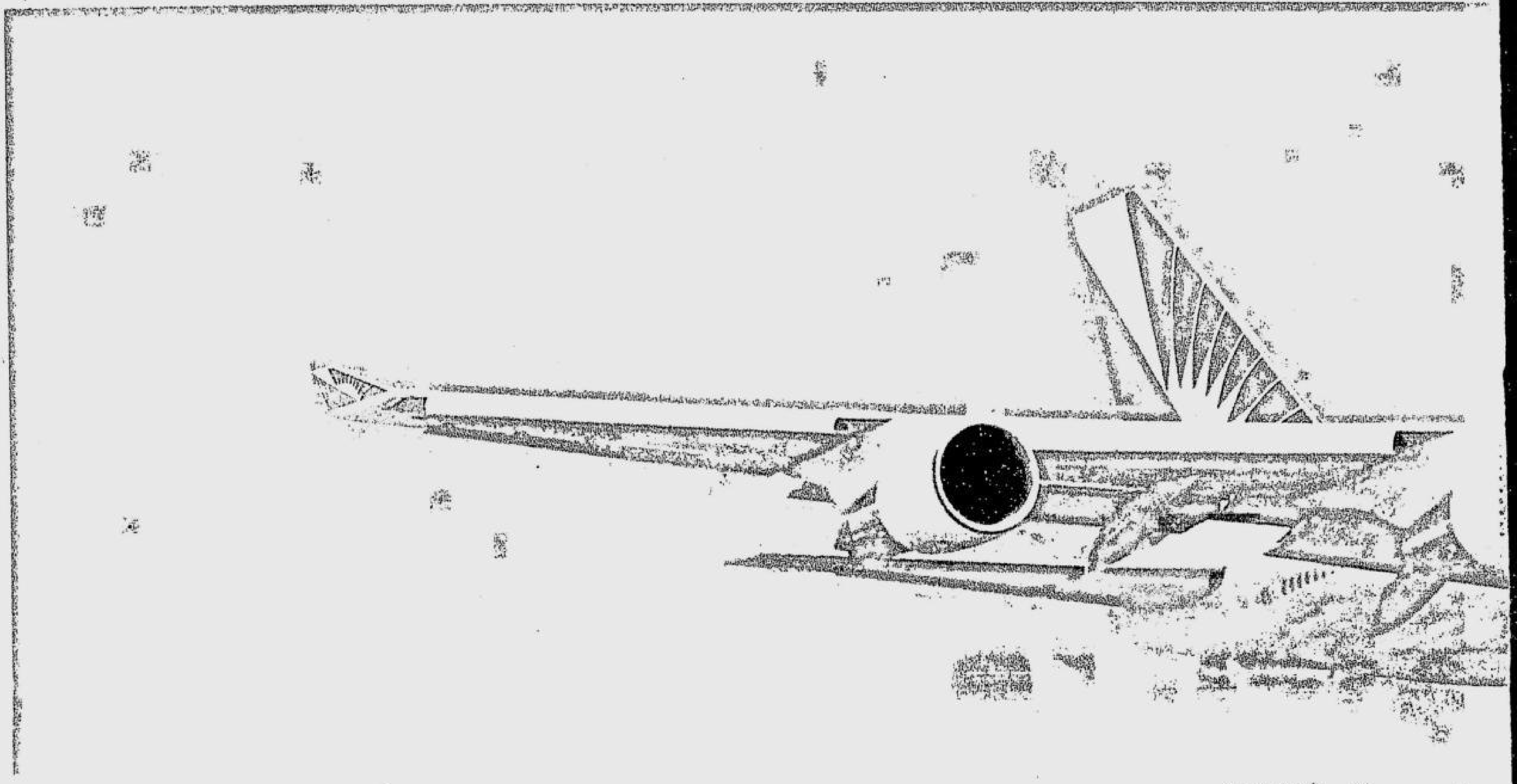
He added that his office would either meet with members of the media to orient them of the rules or send them the list instead.

The promulgation is expected to take place on or before Sept. 15 unless the justices of the antigraft court's Special Division ask the Supreme Court for an extension in rendering a decision on Estrada's P4-billion plunder case.

The members of the Special Division which was created specifically to try Estrada's case are Presiding Justice Teresita Leonardo de Castro, Associate Justices Francisco Villaruz Jr. and Diosdado Peralta.

CLASS PICTURE. Prosecutors, defense lawyers, court staff members and members of the Sandiganbayan special court tryin

posterity after the trial.



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Survey a vindication for Erap, says Jinggoy

g Joseph Estrada's plunder trial pose for

PDI FILE/AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By Kristine L. Alave

A "VINDICATION."

This was how San Juan City Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito described the findings of a recent Social Weather Stations survey that said 77 percent of Mega Manila residents were willing to forgive his father, ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Ejercito said he was also heartened by the survey that showed the same respondents believed President Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, were more corrupt than Estrada.

"We, of course, can't forget the fact that they (the Arroyos) were involved in a power grab... so this (survey) is really a vindication," Ejercito said. "It just goes to show that people believe that my father is not guilty in this political trial."

Estrada is awaiting the verdict in his plunder trial that ended in June, six years after his ouster and arrest in 2001 on charges he took gambling and tax kickbacks and lied about his assets.

The survey also showed that 71 percent of Mega Manila residents believe President Arroyo is involved in corrupt practices while only 31 percent believe this of Estrada. Mike Arroyo was thought of as corrupt by 77 percent of the respondents.

In a separate interview last week, Ejercito said their camp would not stop the people from expressing their sentiments when the Sandiganbayan hands down its verdict in his father's trial soon.

"We don't know how the people would react," he said.

Ejercito said the family believes Estrada would be convicted of plunder.

The heightened security measures being implemented by the government even before the reading of the verdict showed President Arroyo's "insecurities" over his father's popularity, Ejercito said.

An ally of Ms Arroyo's in the House of Representatives, however, yesterday dismissed the SWS survey result that showed 77 percent of the respondents believe she is corrupt.

Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles, former majority leader and current chair of the House contingent to the Commission on Appointments, said the survey was conducted in the opposition's bailiwick and was not representative of the people's true sentiments.

Another Arroyo ally, Bohol Rep. Adam Relson Jala, said the survey only showed that the opposition was "deathly afraid" of Estrada's conviction was just an effort at damage control to preempt a guilty verdict.

The survey, Jala said, was "so self-serving it doesnt need a genius to see a motive." He said the the opposition was again trying to fuel unrest by mind conditioning the public before the court's ruling.

"Please look again. Check and correct me if I am wrong here. Is it not clear that they conducted the survey exclusively in an opposition bailiwick which is Metro Manila?" Nograles said in a text message.

The survey, dubbed "Project Theodore," was conducted on July 18-20 in Metro Manila, Bulacan, Laguna, Cavite and Rizal. It was commissioned by former Sen. Sergio Osmeña III and focused on the people's feelings toward Ms Arroyo and Estrada.

"Manila does not speak for the entire country. That's why the countryside is very angry and neglected. Manila believes that it is the entire Philippines," Nograles, who is from Mindanao, said.

"What about us in Mindanao and the Visayas? We are not part of the Philippines anymore? Does this not create the wrong public perception, half-truths and clear prejudice and a hate campaign against the President?" he said. *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

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OPINION

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Bad posture

EDITORIAL

POSTURING, WITH REGARD TO THE COMING verdict on the plunder trial of former President Joseph Estrada, is the name of the game. In this game, neither the opposition nor the administration is innocent. In the non-stop rumor mill that is the Philippine political scene, not only is a looming verdict widely whispered about, but the Sandiganbayan is supposed to be finding difficulty wrestling with the complexities of the case. What is sure is that the coming verdicts (there are multiple charges, after all) have political circles caught up in a kind of mass hysteria.

The result is saber-rattling on both sides, literally on the part of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and rhetorically on the side of Estrada's partisans. The AFP has held parades to show off the troops, while the Philippine National Police has pledged to mobilize enough policemen for crowd control. Malacañang has launched a propaganda offensive to condition the public into expecting trouble, which the Arroyo administration says it can handle. Estrada loyalists have reacted by proclaiming they can muster crowds and that these crowds would be big and angry.

As if such posturing weren't enough, the Palace and opposition leaders have also taken to working at cross-purposes with Estrada himself. For months, the idea of either a presidential pardon or an amnesty proclamation ratified by Congress, in case of a conviction by the court, has been floated. Administration allies went through the motions of proposing it, and the Palace has also gone through the motions of considering it. The opposition has tacitly endorsed the idea by releasing the results of surveys it commissioned.

However, Estrada himself, whether merely in an act of political theater or because he genuinely believes in his innocence, has insisted that he will never accept a pardon. He may be in detention, but he remains a political virtuoso.

On the surface, it may seem appropriate for the Palace and the opposition to publicly consider options for Estrada after the verdicts have been handed down. Considerations of a pardon or amnesty, after all, mean politics only begins where justice ends in terms of a verdict. It would be a great error, however, for the public to think that all the posturing is par for the course. It is not. The administration and opposition both obviously think they have an insight into the eventual decisions of the court. More than that, both are actively trying to influence the court.

Left to its own devices, the court would have wrapped up the Estrada trial and proceeded with its deliberations and handed down its verdicts at its own pace and in its own good time. The public, used to Estrada's long period of comfortable detention, would probably have shrugged off the whole thing, including the verdicts. The Palace, however, began to sound the alarm with regard to the reactions of Estrada partisans. The alarmed nature of the Palace's reactions in turn inspired new heights of rhetorical bravado on the part of Estrada loyalists.

Sounding the alarm is a tried-and-tested administration tactic to hijack the headlines. The opposition is also an old pro at playing that game, hence its commissioned survey. Both sides are always looking for ways to reinvigorate the dedication of their supporters, while weakening the resolve of their enemies. Obviously, considerations of fair play and justice are irrelevant in the face of such tactical concerns.

The Palace is trying to reassure the Sandiganbayan that there won't be chaos in case of guilty verdicts. The opposition is trying to frighten the Sandiganbayan into thinking there would be a revolt if it convicts Estrada. Both sides are trying to temper whatever verdicts are in the works, by emphasizing the verdicts they'd prefer (and options, including conviction for some charges and possibly, acquittal for others) and verdicts the public allegedly wouldn't like.

In other words, the administration and the opposition are trying to turn the case into a political football and strong-arm the court. By doing so, both sides are further eroding public confidence in the justice system. They are doing a disservice not to Estrada, who is a player in this two-sided game, but to the citizenry.

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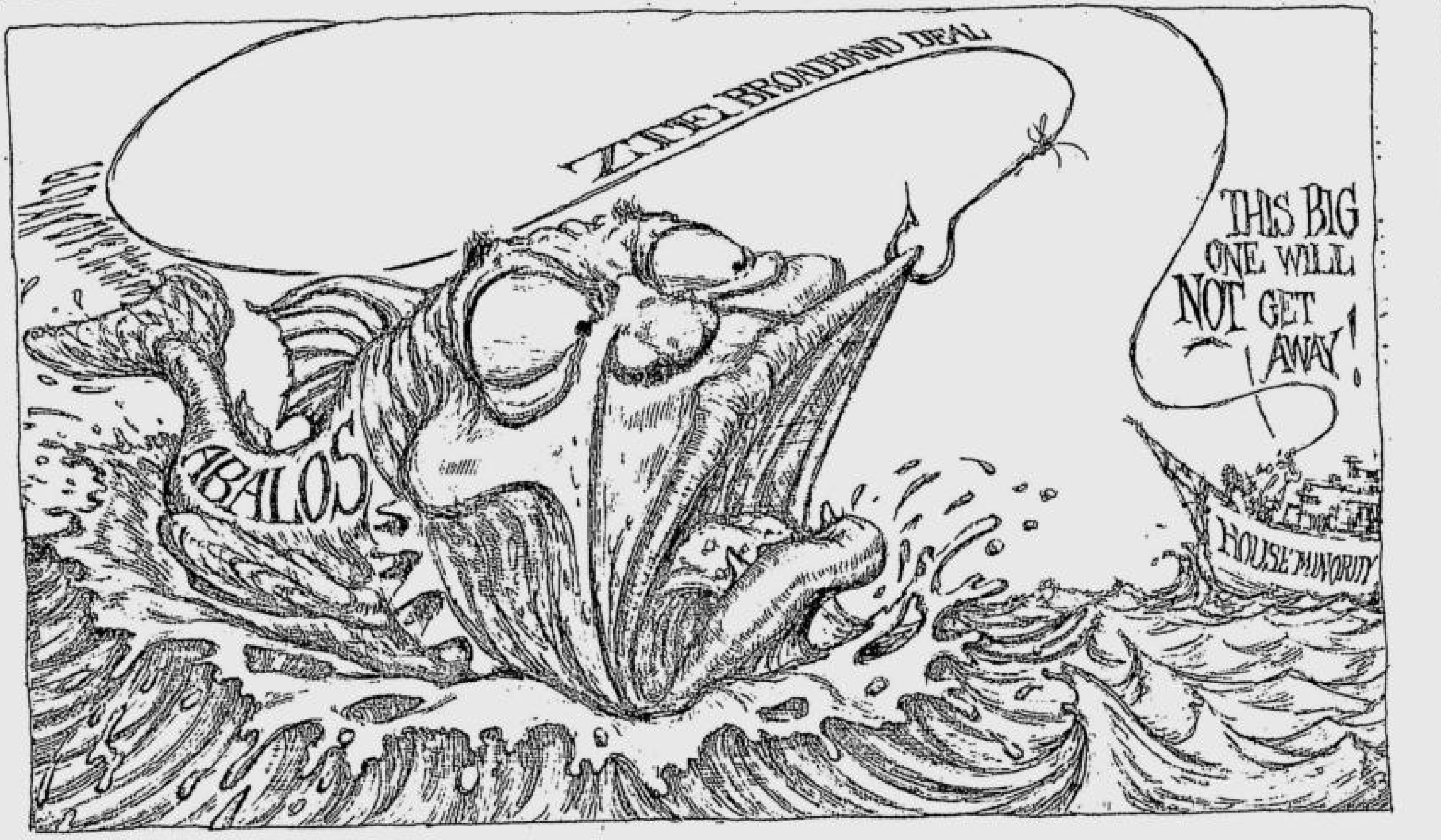

Five evils of cross-ownership in power industry

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS ENdorsed the amendment of the Epira law that, contrary to its original intent of reducing power rates, has instead led to higher rates, the second highest in Asia, next only to those in Japan, a rich and highly developed country with a standard of living many times higher than ours. The Epira was copied from the California model of deregulating and privatizing the monopolistic power industry by creating competition in every sub-sector. Competition will force the players to reduce costs and be more efficient to be able to sell more electricity.

It is difficult for laymen to understand the workings of the power industry. For their benefit, therefore, here is a simplified explanation of the power sector and the Epira and its flaws:

Electricity flows from the generating plant through the transmission lines to the distribution lines of the distribution utility, like Meralco. The distributor connects the users' residences, factories and business establishments to the power sources, installs meters and does monthly readings, sells the electricity and collects the monthly bills.

The Epira that was passed in June 2001 divided the industry into four sectors: generation, transmission, distribution and supply. Transmission and distribution, however, are considered natural monopolies in providing the lines through which power flows and will continue to be regulated sectors under the supervision of the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC). The ERC's job is to make sure that the rates of these two monopolies will always be reasonable and fair.

Accordingly, Section 36 mandated the unbundling of rates and functions of these four sectors.

The National Power Corp. (Napocor) was split into two: generation and transmission. The distribution side was also split. Each one was required to submit its own rates for the review and approval of the ERC.

For the whole thing to work for the benefit of the consumers, there has to be enough players in the generation and supply sectors that will compete with one another in serving the customers.

Section 23 states the whole purpose of the Epira: "A distribution utility shall have the obligation to supply electricity in the least cost manner to its captive market." But this obligation is nullified by the evil of "cross-ownership."

What is cross-ownership? It is the case of a company in one sector, say distribution, owning a sister company in another sector, say generation. There is a conflict of interest here. A distributor cannot supply electricity at the least cost if it has to buy power from a sister company selling its electricity at a high rate.

The framers of Epira knew the harmful effects of cross-ownership and prohibited it in the original version. Unfortunately, lobbying by vested interests won over patriotic integrity so that Section 45 which was supposed to ban cross-ownership was watered down, banning cross-ownership only in the transmission sector and other sectors but not cross-ownership between the distribution and generation sectors. Thus, the Lopez family, which owns Meralco, the country's largest distributor, was allowed to own and operate generation facilities. Epira's purpose is to make distributors like Meralco buy power from competing power generators to get the least cost. But with the loophole in the ban on cross-ownership, Meralco is now allowed to enter into negotiated bilateral contracts with sister generating companies. This loophole has led to five evils, the end result of which is still high power rates.

Evil No. 1: These bilateral contracts totaling 2,300 megawatts so far were sweetheart deals. They all have guaranteed minimum take-or-pay provisions that were the real cause of the skyrocketing Purchased Power Adjustments (PPA). Meralco contracted power at P5.20 per kWh with its sister companies when power can be bought from Napocor and its IPPs (Independent Power Producers) at P3.97 per kWh. This would not have happened if Meralco the distributor, is doing business with an unrelated generator at arm's length. They would have held competitive biddings from generators so that they could supply power at the least cost to their captive customers.

Evil No. 2: Since Meralco represents 72 percent of the country's power requirements, it became a monopoly with full rights to choose who gets to supply their power requirements. The Lopezes of Meralco then become the controller of the country's new generation sector once Napocor is privatized as the Epira envisions. There would be no real competition as intended by the law and therefore no reduction in generation rates. Also, the future development of the generation sector on which the country depends for its future needs, will be totally dependent on the whims and caprices of one group.

Evil No. 3: There will be few bidders for the Napocor power plants because only the Lopez-anointed investors can come into the sector. The government will lose hundreds of billions of pesos in lost value-recovery from the Napocor assets. Nobody will buy the generators if it cannot sell the generated power to distributors like Meralco.

Remember, there were two failed biddings for the 600-MW Calaca power plant. And Masinloc was going to be sold only for $524 million to a Malaysian group with the Lopez-owned First Gen offering only $384 million. In more recent biddings, Masinloc was sold for a whopping $930 million, even higher than the Lopez's offer of $570 million.

(To be continued)

The bell tolls

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

ERAP SAYS THE SOCIAL WEATHER STATIONS survey that shows 48 percent of Filipinos want him pardoned immediately and another 38 percent "pardoned after some time" if he is found guilty of plunder is further proof of his people's continuing faith in him. "I want to thank the people for continuing to believe in me despite the fact that I have spent the last six years, five months and eight days in jail."

Not really. The only one he should really thank is Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The SWS survey does not reflect the people's continuing faith in him, it reflects the people's worsening lack of faith in GMA. It does not reflect the people's belief that he is innocent, it reflects the people's belief that GMA is guilty. It does not reflect the people's desire to see GMA show clemency toward an ex-president who has suffered enough for his grave sins, it reflects the people's desire to see an ex-ed-president (ex-ed at least by the voters) start paying for her graver sins.

The situation is not unlike that of Cory's time. The one thing that doused the nation's fury against the ex-dictator, expressed at the height of Edsa I in a crowd storming through the gates of Malacañang, was neither the skills of Marcos' lawyers, though they were formidable, nor the vast spoils that were offered for division, though it was a veritable Ali Baba treasure. It was the rapaciousness of those who came after Marcos, whose own crookedness and pillage made a nation forget what had come before. Or if not made it forget, at least took the sting off its memory like anaesthesia. It's not easy remembering the whip of yesterday when you are feeling the lash of today.

The situation today is not unlike that of Cory's time, but it is also not quite like it. It is worse—far, far worse. The plunder of the Cory administration might have been epic, but it was nowhere near as epic as Marcos'. The vigilantes and paramilitary groups might have been a slap in the face of the newly restored democracy, but they never rivaled the murderousness of the martial-law regime.

The situation today is the opposite. Erap might have been covetous, but neither he nor his mistresses made this country the most corrupt in Asia. Mr. and Mrs. Pidal have. Erap might have retained the services of gangsters in his Cabinet and cutthroats in his anti-crime squads, but he never wrought the wholesale slaughter of journalists and political activists. GMA and Norberto Gonzales have.

While at this, that was an amusing revelation Erap made: "From the start, they (the emissaries of Ms Arroyo) have offered that I leave for the country of my choice, take anything I want, and no charges will be filed against me. If I were guilty, I would have accepted it right there and then." Yes, amusing. Because if true—and it sounds perfectly believable, given that GMA had been trying to appease the Erap hordes since the so-called "Edsa III"—then that is the difference between Erap on one hand and Marcos and GMA on the other. That difference is not that he is innocent and the others are guilty. That difference is that he is the only guilty party, like Indonesia's Suharto, who never thought of fleeing abroad.

Marcos did. GMA will.

That is his saving grace, though an unwitting one. Erap is the one ex-ed-president who is likely to find America more uncomfortable than jail. If and when GMA is offered the same deal after she is out of power, one way or another—and the one who offers that ought to be shot—I have no doubt she would accept it. I never bought Joker Arroyo's pitch that there was a constitutional remedy to corruption, which was impeachment, but not to stupidity, which could only be endured, which was why GMA was preferable to Erap or FPJ. As experience has shown—in this country, again and again—an easygoing and not very bright rogue is always preferable to a resolute and devious despot.

What all this says is that the "Erap issue" is no longer about Erap, it is about GMA. It doesn't draw attention to the judged, it draws attention to the judge. Not least because at the very time Erap is throwing himself at the feet of Lady Justice, or so it seems, pleading his case before the court of law and the court of public opinion, Lady Macbeth refuses to throw herself at the feet of the people, relying on EO 464 and Miriam Defensor-Santiago, whichever is the greater atrocity, to prevent them from hearing what they have already heard and knowing what they already know. GMA damning Erap is more than a case of the pot calling the kettle black, it's a case of the pygmy of love calling her enemies the titans of hate.

Truly, GMA may not revel too much or too long in the two cases that offer a bottomless pit of revelry. Those two cases being the arrest of Jose Ma. Sison for murder and the impending conviction of Erap for plunder. At first blush that seems a resounding victory for her, representing the scuttling of her enemies. At second blush, or blood, the implications of those developments cannot be lost on someone who stands accused of the very same crimes and more, the crimes of plunder and murder raised to a mind-boggling degree. A conviction of Erap should henceforth make any Philippine president, elected or unelected, but especially so an unelected one, feel the Sword of Damocles hanging over his/her head. And a conviction of Sison should make any Filipino official, Left or Right, ex or ex-ed, realize there can be no safe haven anywhere in the civilized world for those with blood on their hands. Which raises the question again of how gently GMA will go into the night after 2010.

Here is one case where John Donne's famous lines should ring loudly in the halls of Malacañang:

"Never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

Islands of good governance

COMMENTARY

Joachim von Amsberg

WHEN I CAME TO THE PHILIPPINES IN 2004, I was struck by what has been called the "Philippine paradox": How can a country with such incredible potential for rapid development, an outward-oriented economy, located in the fastest-growing region in the world, not produce outstanding development outcomes? With its rich natural resources, dynamic and talented people, and, at least on the surface, development-friendly economic policies, why has the Philippines not achieved faster growth and more significant poverty reduction in the last 30 years?

The answer that we heard was that weakness in governance and weakness of public institutions to work for the common good were holding back the equitable and efficient allocation of resources, depriving the people of public services, and the country of a reliable investment climate that would encourage rapid growth.

If weak governance lies at the heart of lagging development outcomes, what should be the strategy for reform? And how can an international development agency like the World Bank support such reforms? We looked for answers and solutions within the Philippines and found a wealth of experiences and initiatives that create better public institutions, deliver services, encourage popular participation and strengthen the social contract between Filipinos and their government. We called these success stories "islands of good governance" and decided to focus our support on them.

Three years later, I am amazed by the leaps toward good governance that are possible when ingenuity and opportunities for development meet effective leadership.

Fiscal reforms. Three years ago, public deficits were high, debt was increasing and a fiscal crisis threatened to bring poverty to millions. The government had to make difficult decisions in the public interest, and the payoff was huge. Today, the budget is moving toward balance, public debt has decreased and more resources can be invested for development. Financial indicators have improved rapidly, bringing down interest rates and creating the precondition for faster development.

Private delivery of public services. The reform of water service delivery in the East of Metro Manila allowed millions of people to receive efficient water services. Here, incentives given to the private sector to invest corresponded to the public's interest in service delivery.

Judicial reform. Respect for the rule of law lies at the core of good governance and in the Philippines, people respect the decisions of the Supreme Court, whether these are convenient or not. I am awed by the "Justice on Wheels" program of the Supreme Court where judges travel to far-flung areas that otherwise have no access to judicial services, as well as by the commitment of the Court to resolve backlogs and delays.

Procurement reform. At the Department of Education, increased competition and transparency in procurement have lowered the price of textbooks from an average of P100 to P40. Reforms such as the separation of the bidding for manuscripts from the bidding for printing has translated into cumulative savings of P3 billion. The Department of Health has reduced the price of procured drugs, and civil society's role in overseeing transparent procurement and implementation of public expenditure programs has become a model for other countries.

Local governments. LGUs, local communities and NGOs have been busy upgrading slums, providing water, sanitation and solid waste management, preventing and managing disasters, making local bureaucracies more responsive to people's needs, and empowering their constituents. Under the DSWD's KALAHI-CIDDS, local communities develop their own investment priorities and undertake projects at costs often much lower than for projects that are centrally provided.

Although such "islands" have contributed to a more positive outlook for the country, these have yet to reach a scale sufficient to raise the Philippines up the ladder of sustained progress. The development challenge is to effect three transitions toward modern governance.

Economic stability is a short-term challenge where significant progress has been achieved. The payoffs from recent fiscal reforms should serve as an inspiration for perseverance. More efficient tax administration and related reforms remain critical to success.

A dynamic investment climate based on effective competition is achievable in the medium term. Investment in the country, at 15 percent of gross domestic product, continues to lag behind the 20 percent to 30 percent in neighboring countries. Policy reforms that increase competition in key sectors will greatly enhance competitiveness, encourage investments that create jobs, raise incomes and reduce poverty, which in turn, will reinforce support for sound policy reforms.

Social inclusion is the hardest challenge of all. Compared to other countries, the Philippines has very high inequity of incomes, assets and opportunities. The challenge is to escape from the trap of mutually reinforcing inequality and weak governance so that social and economic policies which provide better economic and social opportunities for the less privileged lead to greater equality.

I am optimistic about the future of the Philippines in the medium term. The benefits of reform for economic stability, investment climate, social inclusion and overall better governance will not go unnoticed. The "islands of good governance" demonstrate that the country is capable of moving forward rapidly on this agenda and achieving its potential and its aspirations.

If the Philippines can grasp the current window of opportunity, I am confident that it will achieve the rapid social and economic progress that Filipinos aspire for and deserve.

Joachim von Amsberg is former country director of the World Bank in the Philippines.

A women's afternoon

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A HISTORICAL, MOMENTOUS OCCASION TOOK place yesterday at the Senate, but I very much fear it would not receive the media attention it deserves. This was the observance of the 26th anniversary of the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Cedaw), especially the launching of the book "Shaping the Women's Global Agenda: Filipino Women in the United Nations," that tells the life stories and UN experiences of seven Filipinas, described as "the mothers of the contemporary women's movement (in the Philippines)."

Gathered at the Senate halls that afternoon were former Senators Helena Z. Benitez and Leticia Ramos Shahani, Ambassador Rosario Gonzalez Manalo, Dr. Patricia B. Licuanan, former Secretary Teresita "Ging" Quintos Deles and Dr. Aurora Javate de Dios. They were joined by the sister of the late Justice Irene Cortes. Just reading through the names of the book subjects tells us in a nutshell the history of the local women's movement, while the book would tell us in further detail how these women blazed a trail for women's rights and issues in the international stage and even helped midwife Cedaw, nowadays known as the Women's Bill of Rights, from a declaration of intent to an internationally binding document that has been ratified by a majority of the world's nations.

Edited by Olivia Hubilla Tripon of Women's Feature Service (for purposes of disclosure, I am one of the writers, with Ambassador Manalo as my subject), "Shaping the Women's Global Agenda" details, through brief sketches of each of the women, the work they did to map out the course the United Nations would take in advancing the cause of women worldwide. This work would be done mainly through two bodies: the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and Cedaw, either as chair or members of the Cedaw committee on experts.

* * *

IT was Benitez, elected chair of the UNCSW in 1966, who "successfully presided over the first major policy statement adopted by the Commission—the much debated draft of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women—in 1967," though it would take 10 years before that statement would evolve into the Convention we know today.

Three other Filipinas—Shahani, Manalo and Licuanan—would succeed Benitez as UNCSW chairs, each of them facing unique challenges, from getting nations to overcome geo-political differences to focus on women's rights and issues, to overcoming traditionalists' resistance to such issues as reproductive rights and equality under the law for women.

Three other women—Cortes, Deles and De Dios—and Manalo, who would win the distinction of having chaired both the UNCSE and the Cedaw Committee, also raised the Filipina's profile as the country's representatives to the Cedaw Committee, each one also focusing on particular areas of concern that were not just vital issues for Filipinos and all women worldwide, but also deeply personal advocacies they held.

In her introduction to the CSW, Yna Masilungan (who also wrote the profile of Shahani) pointed out: "At a time when being Filipinas abroad means being ridiculed and having to suffer indignities, (these Filipinas) show they can bring pride to their country. At a time when the term Filipinas can conjure up all sorts of pejorative images, these (women) evoke nothing but excellence and professionalism. They confirm that Filipinas can stand among the best in the world."

* * *

IT was thus fitting that to pay homage to these "mothers," women senators turned up at the event not just to extol the seven "women in the UN," but also to speak of their own advocacies for women and their commitment to women's issues.

Sen. Jamby Madrigal spoke of the need to "right the balance" in the world by eliminating all forms of oppression against women. Sen. Loren Legarda traced her own personal journey toward an understanding and advocacy of women's issues, particularly the issues of trafficking and violence against women. Sen. Pia Cayetano likewise mentioned her own awakening to feminism, expressing a commitment to work for the passage of the draft "Magna Carta of Women" which seeks to consolidate all legislation on women.

Senate President Manuel Villar spoke of his own involvement in Cedaw, having sponsored the ratification of the optional protocol of Cedaw in the 12th Congress, which makes it possible for a woman who has exhausted all legal means in her own country, to seek justice from the Cedaw Committee. The presence of the seven "mothers," he said, "makes me inspired to focus on women's advancement in the legislative agenda." He likewise cited "the strong women in my life," beginning with his mother who taught him "to dream big and work hard," and his wife, Rep. Cynthia Villar, whom he extolled as "very competent, very intelligent," adding that these may be the reasons their marriage has lasted for almost 40 years.

* * *

ON THE same occasion, the winners of the Cedaw Songwriting Contest were recognized and awarded with trophies and cash prizes. The winning song is aptly titled "Pangarap ng Kababaihan (Women's Dreams)," which sums up, in a tuneful, moving manner, all the issues that Filipinas confront and their hopes of attaining their dreams through Cedaw.

Congratulations to all the women profiled and involved in the production of the book, but most especially to the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), particularly its Chair Myrna Yao and Executive Director Miyen Versoza, for a memorable afternoon that shows us that sisterhood not only has a long, illustrious history in this country, it is also alive and kickin'—and bitchin'!

The cardinal who made history

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

AKLAN IS GENERALLY ASSOCIATED WITH: THE rowdy Ati-atihan, the fine *piña* cloth and the pink sand beaches of Boracay. Sometimes Aklan is associated with the pre-colonial lawgiver Kalantiao and his famous code composed in 1433, but since Kalantiao and the Code have been declared a hoax by the National Historical Institute, something or someone else must replace these.

Like an answered prayer, I found myself in a place off Kalibo called New Washington to unveil a historical marker in the small town where the late Jaime Cardinal Sin was born. Everyone knows the critical stance taken by the cardinal during the Marcos years, and his pivotal role in Edsa I and II, so he is not just part of Philippine history, he made history. The cardinal may be history to us, but to the people of New Washington he remains the kindly "Ame" and is remembered with affection rather than awe.

During the presentation of the historical marker to municipal officials, I made the mistake (not once but twice) of referring to the town as a city. Instead of being corrected, it was hoped that my mistake would become a reality. *Magdilang anghel ka sana*, I was told. I replied that Dapitan in Zamboanga del Norte looks every inch a sleepy town, at best it is an over-grown barangay, but since Rizal was exiled there, it was promoted to a city. Thus, the town of New Washington may not have the physical and material resources required of a full-fledged city, but because one of her illustrious sons made Philippine history, perhaps it could be declared a city by an act of Congress or the Senate.

Antonio L. Cabangon Chua donated the impressive bronze statue of the cardinal that now stands in the town plaza facing the church. The cardinal is depicted at his chubby best wearing a mitre and holding a staff with his left hand while the right hand is poised to bestow a blessing. It is an impressive monument, except for one important detail. Since the monument has no color because it is made of polished bronze, it does not have red that makes the viewer know he was a cardinal. The iconographic symbols for a bishop, the mitre and staff, are there, but the pallium exclusive to archbishops was not fully articulated by the artists whose knowledge of iconography is obviously wanting.

The pope and all archbishops wear this narrow circular band of white wool on their neck and shoulders marked with six dark crosses. One strip of this band hangs on the front of the wearer, another at the back. A pallium is woven from wool taken from the two lambs that are presented each year to the pope at the Church of St. Agnes on her feast day. When completed, palliums are made to rest atop the tomb of St. Peter from whom episcopal authority can be traced. An archbishop cannot validly undertake certain functions without a pallium.

Palliums are quite rare because they are not passed on but buried with the person honored by it in life. Once, after Mass, the late Basil Cardinal Hume asked me to fold his pallium, put it in its silver box, and hand it over to the Cathedral Master of Ceremonies who was busy doing something else. Mindful of the long history of this special strip of wool that goes back to the 6th century, I handled it with care and reverence.

I was thinking of the pallium as speeches were delivered by all the assembled VIPs who descended upon New Washington: the Senate President, the Speaker of the House, the secretaries of agriculture, social services, and the Presidential Management Staff, the bishop of Antipolo who pitched in for the cardinal-archbishop of Manila, the former ambassador to the Holy See, etc. etc. It was edifying to hear anecdotes about the cardinal and his legendary wit and sense of humor. I always remind my readers and students that Rizal, Bonifacio and our heroes of the late 19th century were simple men and women who made history. They were (and they remain) human before we made them heroes, honored with monuments of bronze and stone.

In New Washington, we heard stories about Ame. Once, he saw a woman crying because she needed a huge *caldero* to cook a meal. He consoled her a while, went out and returned with a big *caldero* and firewood.

Then, there was the man who couldn't go to the pre-marriage validation because he didn't have a decent pair of pants. Ame gave him his own pants and hoped they fit.

I met Cardinal Sin thrice: Once to receive a Catholic Mass Media Award and another time to receive the Catholic Author Award, but these were quick impersonal photo opportunities. What was special was when I accompanied the Abbot of Montserrat on a courtesy call and was surprised that our cardinal, who was of Chinese ancestry, spoke fluent and perfect Spanish. He held forth for over an hour, cracking jokes and spouting aphorisms. It was a side to him few people knew. Before we left he opened his desk drawer, searching for tokens to gift everyone present—from rosaries and stampitas to a roll of *hopia*. Obviously, these were recycled gifts, but they were things to remember him by. I wished I would get a rosary, the better to pray with, but I think I got the day-old *hopia*.

Seeing the monument and historical marker in Aklan last week made me remember those fleeting meetings with history and made me realize that seeing the cardinal in person was grace enough.

* * *

Evangelical Catholics

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT THE "CRAB MENTALITY" IN the split within the Couples for Christ (CfC). I wouldn't throw out this angle, but I worry that the focus on alleged jealousy could become self-defeating, not just for CfC but for the NGO sector in general. Already, I'm getting "You see, I told you so!" feedback from Filipino-Americans who have always been reluctant to support local organizations because they are said to be prone to in-fighting and corruption.

My take here is that we are dealing with two groups that have big differences in the interpretation of what it means to be a Catholic organization. On one hand, we have Tony Meloto and Gawad Kalinga, who have worked, in his own words, on "the Filipino values of integrity, honesty and *bayanihan*" to mobilize communities around housing, health and livelihood projects. Meloto's approach has come into conflict with what we can call "evangelical Catholics," represented by Frank Padilla and his breakaway restoration movement.

Padilla says Gawad Kalinga has moved away from the CfC's original mission, if not run counter to the Catholic Church's teachings. One example they've been citing is Gawad Kalinga's acceptance of money from corporations that are in favor of "population control." Although he didn't name the corporations, I think Padilla was referring to Pfizer, which is supporting Meloto's health projects. Pfizer produces the injectable contraceptive, Depo Provera.

Padilla seems especially strident in his opposition to family planning, given the way his group is called: CfC FFFL (Foundation for Family and Life). Meloto has been civil in his response, saying that he subscribes to the Catholic Church's pro-life teachings, his statements suggesting a wider definition of life to include homeless children and families living in slums.

Defending Catholicism

With the majority of Filipinos claiming to be Catholics, it is important that we understand what's going on in the Church's corridors of power, both in the Vatican and in organizations.

I got the term "evangelical Catholicism" from an article in the Aug. 31, 2007 issue of the National Catholic Reporter (NCR), a liberal American Catholic periodical. The article, "The Triumph of Evangelical Catholicism," was written by Fr. John L. Allen. There was no mention of the Philippines in the article, but I was struck by how the description of evangelical Catholicism resonated with the CfC controversy.

Allen proposes in his article that "beginning with the election of Pope John Paul II in 1978, Catholicism has become a steadily more evangelical Church." During John Paul's papacy, the head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith was the ever vigilant and ever orthodox Josef Cardinal Ratzinger. The cardinal is now Pope Benedict XVI.

Allen wrote his article in the light of two events, both occurring within three days in early July. The first was Pope Benedict's allowing priests to celebrate the Latin Mass without permission of the local bishop. The second was a declaration from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which states that the Church of Christ "subsists in" Catholicism.

These two moves by the Vatican are, for Allen, "robust assertions" of an evangelical impulse, with three major objectives: accenting the authority of the Pope and the bishops, patrolling doctrinal borders and asserting the exclusivity of Catholicism as the way to salvation.

Allen's term is new, but these evangelical Catholics have been around for many years, reacting mainly against what they see as a dangerous global drift toward secularism, and to what the Pope has called "the dictatorship of relativism." They worry especially about the latter, which suggests a situational ethics that calls for more understanding of the circumstances which might lead to "sin," for example when a person steals out of desperate poverty. They also oppose the view that all religions are equally valid, thus the recent insistence on the use of the word "subsists," which according to Allen, is a way of saying the "true Church of Christ endures" in Catholicism alone.

Evangelical Catholics see doctrinal purity as a response to a secular and pluralistic world. In 1997, Pope John Paul II issued a document, "Ad Tuendam Fidem," setting penalties for dissent from "definitive teachings." Such teachings make no claims of divine revelation, but are there by "logical necessity," meaning they have to remain simply because they have been taught by the Catholic Church over the centuries. Ratzinger at that time cited the ban on women priests, the ban on euthanasia and the immorality of prostitution and fornication as examples where there could be no compromise. Today, we see that absolute stand taken by local evangelical Catholics against contraception.

Evangelical Catholics are still a minority, but are "undeniably dynamic," according to Allen. To be sure, there are variations, too, in how hard-line they can be. In the United States, an entire town, Ave Maria, is being built as an evangelical Catholic community by Tom Monaghan, who made his fortune on the Domino's pizza chain. I watched him in a recent CNN interview clarifying that the community would not require that residents be Catholics. He also backed down on a previous plan to forbid the sale of contraceptives in Ave Maria, after he was told such a ban would be illegal.

Witness

There's more then to this CfC battle than meets the eye. Padilla and his restoration movement is only one of the more recent manifestations of evangelical Catholic energy. The past few years, they have been vocal in trying to get the government to follow a conservative Catholic line in suppressing family planning efforts.

I admire the way Gawad Kalinga has taken on a social development agenda, and I can only hope Meloto and his followers prove that Catholicism can be advanced, too, by taking up our share of social responsibilities in a pluralistic society.

The socially engaged Catholic is not unique. A strong "humanist Buddhist" movement has emerged in Taiwan and spread throughout Southeast Asia. One group, Tzu Chi, recently moved all the residents of an urban slum area in Jakarta into a housing project they had built, complete with schools—and a mosque. Like Meloto and Gawad Kalinga, humanist Buddhists have sometimes been criticized as having diluted their religiosity, but they explain that Buddhism has to go beyond prayers.

I couldn't help thinking, too, of how the Filipino diaspora includes quite a number of Catholic priests sent out as missionaries to all the corners of the world. It would be interesting to see if they pursue a path of aggressive evangelism through preaching and claiming to being the only true religion, or instead choose to bear witness to Christ by serving people and communities.

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Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

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TEAM ENERGY CORPORATION 5/F CTC Bldg., 2232 Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	Akio Matsuzaki	Executive Vice President for operation
TEAM ENERGY CORPORATION 5/F CTC Bldg., 2232 Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	Takao Onuki	Executive Vice President and Chief Finance Officer
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ARISTON HARDWARE MART, INC. 2248 Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City	Hanping Hu	Internal Sales Coordinator
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RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC-Regional Director

(PDI - Sept. 5, 2007)

Law bent to serve powerful

WILL SOME OF OUR LEADERS continue to block the public clamor for a reinvestigation of the "Hello Carci" incident? When will they face the fact that some questions are still hanging in the air because they chose to ignore them three years ago?

To put it simply, ignoring the questions made them live with the painful consequence, which is that the ordeal left them confused and dazed, unable to recognize what is right and what is wrong. If Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago indulged in more clever rhetoric in her speech (Aug. 28) about what is illegal and inadmissible in court, it was only because the trash she stored in her already cluttered mind made her forget that the spirit of the law is more important than the letter of the law.

What good is the law if, in the hands of the deluded, it only serves the interests of the powerful few to the detriment of the marginalized multitude? Is Santiago denying that the law has time and again been used by the rich and strong to frustrate the will of the poor and the weak?

It is time our leaders understood the fact that our Constitution is there purposely to uphold the dreams and aspirations of the entire citizenry, not just the ambitions and greed of the selfish powerful. That means leaders cannot persist in interpreting the law according to their own selfish inclination.

Indeed, they must realize that their tendency to talk glibly about the law—while they ignore the need for public consultation—hides the intention to deceive. This is what muddles the issues, thus violating the true objective of the law. This is why there is so much injustice in our system. Indeed, it is sad that our deluded leaders have wrought so much divisiveness—the product of the bad advice to "divide and rule"—just to be able to stay in power.

And it is certainly a shame that a senator of long standing like Santiago chose to belittle the "tortured manner" of Sen. Francis Escudero during his interpellation. For it clearly showed she has no respect for anyone who would dare to show more insight, more honesty and more promise than she could in something as important as upholding the truth for the nation's sake.

The question now is, if the corrupt in our midst have soiled the law with their dirty hands and expect us to bow down to their antics, will the rest of us not rise up to fight for the truth and thus preserve our nationhood?

—ERNESTO K. MAGTOTO,
ernestomagtoto@yahoo.com

Amend EVAT law to exempt elderly and sick persons

SENIOR CITIZENS AND DISabled persons are very grateful that the Supreme Court has set aside the petition of a certain drug store to annul the mandatory grant of a 20-percent discount to the elderly and disabled.

However, they are disappointed that they are still required to pay an additional 12 percent of the value of medicine and food they purchase. It is very clear in their receipts that drug stores, fast-food outlets, entertainment establishments, etc. also charge senior citizens the EVAT.

This means that senior citizens effectively enjoy only 8 percent of the 20 percent discount granted by Republic Act 7432 and BFAD Circular No. 23 series of 1994 on the purchases of senior citizens.

Congress should amend the EVAT law to exempt all senior citizens from the 12 percent tax. Anyway, they don't really have a long time to live. Also, the EVAT funds are to be spent for projects which the elderly and sick persons might no longer benefit from because of age.

—JOSE S. OCAMPO,
2227 Romblon St.,
1008 Sampaloc, Manila

LA/MAT 15215/2007 (S08)
FCMC 5156/2007

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE
HONGKONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
MATRIMONIAL CAUSES NO. 5156 OF 2007

BETWEEN

JULIETA DESACADA Petitioner
Also known as AMON, JULIET D.

And

MARINO AMON Respondent

A DIVORCE PETITION HAS BEEN FILED AGAINST THE UNDER-MENTIONED MARINO AMON, whose address is unknown to the Petitioner, may apply at the Family Court Registry at M2, Wanchai Law Court, No.12 Harbour Road, Hong Kong SAR for a copy of the Petition. If within one month he has not communicated with the Registry, the Court may hear the case in his absence.

Register

To be advertised as follows :-
Once in Philippine Daily Inquirer, a newspaper published and circulating in Philippines.

(PDI - September 05, 2007)

Conflicting statements on rice supply

IN THE INQUIRER'S AUG. 7 ISSUE, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap boasted that "rice supply (will be) enough despite the drought." In the Aug. 9 issue of the INQUIRER, he contradicted himself and offered the incoherent alibi that "the effects of the dry spell meant it would now be difficult to achieve the country's production growth." And then he said that "the agriculture department would need about P150 million for this turnaround program to boost yields ..."

With billions of pesos already released by the government to implement Yap's grandiose projects, he still keeps asking for more and more purportedly to solve the country's rice shortage. Yet, I have not heard from Yap where those billions of pesos have gone.

Visit the farmlands of small farmers in the countryside, and you will hear nothing from these small farmers but their clamor for subsidized fertilizers, affordable hybrid rice seeds for higher production, and easy access to loans so they can plant and harvest rice to support their families who can hardly afford three square meals a day.

On the other hand, all we hear is an agriculture department preoccupied with oodles and oodles of travel vouchers for employees who do nothing but wait inside air-conditioned rooms for the office clock to chime 5 p.m. This is not to mention the unaccounted millions of pesos the department has splurged for sumptuous meals in expensive hotels, purportedly during seminars and emergency meetings (to discuss strategies to boost rice production and the repair of broken irrigation systems).

It is hoped that there is no "fertilizer scam" in the making.

—SOLEDAD BARTE,
Pototan, Iloilo

LETTERS

Time to expand stagnant code for Muslims

THE HISTORICAL ANTECEdents bolstering the claim that our Muslim brothers and sisters are a neglected lot are indubitable. Since 1977, Presidential Decree 1083 or the Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines, has never been expanded.

Muslim and Christian scholars are in agreement that the law covers only half of the Muslim life—civil. It's time that PD 1083 incorporated criminal provisions covering exclusively the Muslims in the Philippines.

The Muslim populace in Manila and Luzon has tremendously increased. A Sharia district court should be established in Manila. Also, the teachers in madrasa (Muslim schools) should be paid by the national government.

Imagine 30 years of doing nothing on the legal development of the Muslims. No wonder we can never stop the Muslim rebellion.

—V. EMMANUEL C. FONTANILLA,
3/F Gonzales Bldg.,
Pioneer Avenue,
General Santos City

Catholic vote non-existent

RAUL C. PANGALAngan's "The myth of the Catholic vote," (INQUIRER, 4/20/07) did not mention the unpublished report of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the real story of cheating in the May 2004 presidential election.

The CBCP reportedly was about to issue a circular enumerating areas where election irregularities were discovered. The report concluded that there was no massive electoral fraud at the presidential level contrary to media reports. This was the CBCP's basis for not supporting the impeachment move, aside from the vacuum of leadership issue.

The CBCP did not pursue the report because at the time the "Hello Garci" tapes had already created a "massive avalanche of force" which couldn't be neutralized by its findings.

The legitimacy question became the political tool of the opposition. It was pontificated by Conrado de Quiros. I believe, the parallelism of the opposition's strategy and De Quiros' unfounded syllogism did not involve and create a good sum. It is purely based on circumstances.

This is the reason we Catholics have no solid vote. On the other hand, it is good because we did not sell our freedom.

—ISIDRO C. VALENCIA,
lay minister,
Special Ministry of the Holy Communion,
Our Lady of the Poor Parish, Taguig City

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Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Pampanga honors Augustinian legacies

By Tonette Orejas
City of San Fernando

KAPAMPANGAN PEOPLE filled the San Agustin Church and its nearby museum in Intramuros, Manila, on the night of Aug. 24 to pay tribute to Augustinian missionaries who had sailed from there to Pampanga 435 years ago and influenced the natives' character, culture and history.

As they stood on the same grounds where some of those 100 friars lived and trained in, they bridged the time, seeing past and present connections between Fray Juan Gallegos, who set foot in Lubao in 1572, and far, far, far down time when Fr. Eddie Panlilio, who finished theology at the St. Augustine Major Seminary, was elected governor in 2007.

"Holy ground," was how Dr. Arlyn Villanueva, president of the Holy Angel University, called the event's venue.

By the way the tribute and the celebration of continuing collaboration turned up, the people want to remember the Augustinian fathers beyond white robes and emblems of a flaming heart.

Their "enduring legacies" are the Roman Catholic faith and values, heritage churches and architectural knowledge, schools and education initiatives, publications that chronicled the language and culture, ecclesiastical arts and culinary tradition, said San Fernando Archbishop Paciano Aniceto at the Mass he celebrated with Bishop Roberto Mallari and eight priests.

Other legacies are the archival documents, the solidarity of friars with the faithful in times of wars, calamities and epidemics, the opening of roads, and their engineering attempts to provide irrigation to farmers.

The extent of the Augustinians' work and the breadth of their influence spoke of the fervor with which the pioneers had lived out the dictum of their founder, St. Augustine, that "our hearts are restless until they rest in (God)," said Fray Francisco Musni, archivist and researcher of the HAU's Center for Kapampangan Studies, which organized the tribute.

Aniceto said the Archdiocese of San Fernando was "most profoundly grateful for the gift of faith" because it steeled the people in adverse times like Mt. Pinatubo's 1991 eruptions and the lingering disaster it spawned for seven years.

That gift, he said, had flourished because several Kapampangan, like Rufino Cardinal Santos, the first Filipino cardinal, became church pioneers themselves.

In gratitude, the provincial board presented a copy of Resolution No. 945 to Fr. William Araña, OSA, vicar of the Orient of the Philippines, Augustinian Province, and to Alvaro Trejo, charge d'affaires of the Spanish Embassy.

The resolution gives "due recognition and honor to the friar missionaries of the Calced Order of Saint Augustine for their pioneering efforts in Pampanga and for their role in the preservation of the culture."

That made Pampanga, the first and last Augustinian territory in Luzon until 1960, to be the "first province in the Philippines to officially thank the Spanish missionaries who labored in the country during colonial times," said Robby Tantingco, the center's executive director.

One of the high points was the launch of the English translations of Fray Diego Bergaño's two books, the "Arte de la Lengua Pampanga" (1729 Kapampangan Grammar) and the "Vocabulario de Pampango" (1732 Kapampangan Dictionary).

Bergaño and his collaborator then, Don Juan Zuñiga of Mexico town, managed to reach out to the present through the translations of Fr. Edilberto Santos and Fr. Venancio Samson.

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IT IS WITH GREAT PRIDE AND PRIVILEGE that I greet my colleagues within the Philippine Councilors League (PCL) as it marks the start of its week-long celebration of Philippine Councilors Week.

Seventeen years since its founding on September 7, 1990, the PCL remains steadfast in its sworn duty to be the precursor of development programs in the local government level through its legislative undertakings and as policy makers.

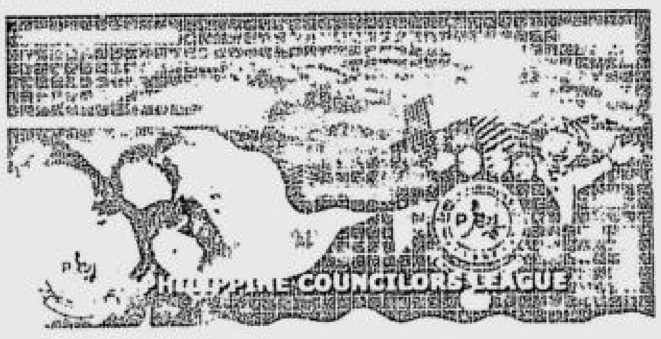
We desire to celebrate our founding anniversary with week-long activities which include among others the simultaneous tree planting, dental-medical missions, and the giving of recognition to the country's outstanding farmers, teachers, policemen and other civil servants.

As active participants in the governance of local government units and in nation-building as a whole, the PCL is now conducting simultaneous elections nationwide as part of organizing its provincial, regional and national organization. The first quarter of 2008 shall witness the emergence of a new set of officers at the national level who shall continue to pursue the noble vision of the PCL of bringing an empowered foundation of governance that will serve as catalyst towards progress of people within a sustainable environment for a strong and united Philippines.

The Philippine Councilors League is now one of the most if not the strongest league in the country. Its liquidity is the envy of other leagues thus giving it the financial muscle to implement its various programs aimed at extending multiple benefits to its bona fide members. The steady increase in membership and equity makes it possible for the league to innovate programs whose end-result will be for the welfare of its members.

Finally, I am proud and happy to announce that indeed your league is in good hands under our vigilant leadership.

Long live PCL! Mabuhay!



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"PCL is an empowered foundation of governance that serves as catalyst towards progress of people within a sustainable environment for a strong and united Philippines".

Adopted during the PCL President's Academy on September 29-October 1, 2004 at Taal Vista Hotel, Tagaytay City.

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The PCL firmly believes that the promotion of the general welfare of the country and the delivery of basic services to the remotest barangays is better achieved by and through a genuine, effective and productive local autonomy and development of self-reliance, as PCL binds itself with the blessings and guidance of the Father of all mankind.

Adopted from the Preamble of the PCL Constitution and By-Laws ratified during the First National Congress held at the Ninoy Aquino Memorial Stadium, Malate, Metro Manila on September 7-9, 1990

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- Sharing of resources and experiences beneficial to the members; and
- Adherence to the principles of consultative and collective governance

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₱75-M project bleeds coffers of RP's biggest power co-op

LIPA CITY—HOW CAN A NINE-DAY-OLD COMPANY with a paid-up capital of only P62,500 bankroll a P75-million computerization project of the country's biggest electric cooperative?

For more than two years now, startled member-consumers of the Batangas II Electric Cooperative Inc. (Batelec II) have yet to hear any logical explanation from the co-op's board of directors on this query.

"From whichever way you look at it, the contract is grossly disadvantageous and onerous to the co-op. It's really outrageous," says Marlyn Caguimbal, the current general manager of the power co-op.

Caguimbal was referring to stipulations in the contract which the 12 members of the electric co-op's board of directors entered into with a company called I-Solv Technologies Inc. (I-solv).

The idea for the computerization program came in 2003 after the election of the 15-member board of directors.

Reynaldo Panaligan was then voted as president of the board.

A resident of Alitagtag town, Panaligan is also a reporter for the Manila Bulletin covering the justice beat.

Anomalous project

With a monthly average sale of P340 million and over 180,000 member-consumers, Batelec II is considered the biggest electric cooperative in the country.

But the electric co-op was cash-strapped.

In 2004, Batelec II had a total loss of over P200 million.

Despite the co-op's financial woes, the board deemed the project necessary. Through a resolution, the directors awarded the computerization program to I-solv with a budget of P75 million on April 15, 2004.

Under the contract, signed by Panaligan and I-solve president Manuel Ferdinand Trinidad, the co-op will pay P2 million a month, with P3 million as the last payment for 36 months.

Concerned consumers found that I-solv was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on April 6, 2004, or nine days before it bagged the multimillion-peso project.

They also found that the company, with business address on Red Flower Compound, Sta. Ana Drive, Sun Valley in Parañaque City, only had P62,500 as paid-up capital.

They learned that the board spent P6.1 million for 10 boom trucks that were bought for P600,000 although they cost just about P300,000 each.

Audit report

These prompted the consumers to ask the National Electrification Administration for an audit.

On March 18, 2005, a NEA audit team revealed there was no bidding for the computerization project.

It said it was done with "undue haste" without a technical study and that it wasn't the role of Panaligan and the other directors to award projects.

The awarding of contracts, it said, was the sole function of the bids and awards committee.

It found that the project was not build-operate-transfer as provided for by the board resolution.

The NEA also found that the bidding for the 10 boom trucks was rigged to favor one company.

Graft cases

On May 12, 2005, a group of consumers sued the 12 directors for graft.

Aside from Panaligan, named respondents were Isagani Casalme, Cesario Gutierrez, Celso Landicho, Tita Matulin, Jose Rizal Remo, Cipriano Roxas, Eduardo Tagle, Ruben Calinisan, Gerardo Hernandez, Ireneo Montecer and Tirso Ramos.

Mayors from the 15 municipalities in the co-op's service area also filed a similar complaint.

Panaligan and his 11 co-accused denied any wrongdoing. Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Ifugao gov wages war on 'jueteng,' corruption

KIANGAN, IFUGAO—JUST LIKE the freedom fighters who banished the Tiger of Malaya, Japanese Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita, from Ifugao in 1945, Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. on Sunday vowed to rid the province of corruption and jueteng.

Addressing 400 war veterans and their families during the commemoration here of Victory Day when Yamashita surrendered to end World War II in Asia, Baguilat warned bet collectors and operators, and even policemen, to stop jueteng or "we will banish you the way our grandparents banished Yamashita from Ifugao 62 years ago."

New war

It was on Sept. 2, 1945 when Yamashita came down from his mountain hideout in Hungduan town to surrender to Filipino and American forces in Kiangan.

"That ended the war and ushered in an era of peace in the country," Baguilat told the crowd that joined the aging war veterans in remembering the end of World War II.

"Today, we are fighting a different kind of war ... against poverty, illiteracy and corruption," he said.

He said it would need the officials' political will and community help to fight corruption, illegal gambling and jueteng.

Guerrilla tactics

He asked the police and the community to support his campaign against jueteng, which he called a "guerrilla war."

"We cannot win this battle without the cooperation of the community ... Our veterans survived the last war because they were supported by the community who hid them from the Japanese and provided them food and information," he said.

"So if the community will continue to bet on jueteng and will not report the activities to the authorities, then we cannot do anything."

Baguilat said it was ironic that the Japanese, the enemies of Filipinos in the last war, are now among Ifugao's biggest supporters.

Ironies

He cited the provincial projects that the Japanese are now supporting. These are the projects on maternal and child health care supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Ambangal mini-hydro power supported by the Tokyo Power Electric Corp.

Baguilat also said there are plans to put up a Japanese tea plantation in Ifugao, and to sell *dojo*, an eel like-fish that thrives in rice paddies, to Japanese and Taiwanese restaurants in Subic and Metro Manila. *Inquirer Northern Luzon*

GMA firm: Build interchange at Pampanga SCTEx

CLARK FREEPORT—PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's directive to the Bases Conversion Development Authority to build an additional interchange at the Pampanga side of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway became clear on Monday.

Secretary Cerge Remonde, director general of the Presidential Management Staff, instructed BCDA president Narciso Abaya to submit an implementation report for monitoring purposes.

The PMS released on Monday the copy of Remonde's Aug. 23 memorandum to the Advocacy for the Development of Central Luzon (ADCL), which, together with Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao, had lobbied for the Porac-Angeles City interchange to further improve the access of the "SCTEx 11."

Beneficiaries

The SCTEx 11 refers to eight towns and three cities located along the 93.77-km highway being built on a P23.06-billion loan from the Japanese government and a P4-billion counterpart by the BCDA.

The ADCL is organizing the SCTEx 11 to help local governments of Dinalupihan and Hermosa in Bataan; Floridablanca, Porac, Lubao, Mabalacat towns and Angeles and San Fernando cities in Pampanga; and Bamban, Concepcion and Tarlac City in Tarlac, to develop a growth area that may be spun by the economic activities in the Subic and Clark freeports and Luisita Industrial Park.

Fund search

Ms Arroyo first gave the directive to build the interchange when she led the groundbreaking rites for Texas Instruments on Aug. 16 in Clark.

In a phone interview on Tuesday, Abaya said the interchange would initially cost the BCDA between P280 million and P290 million.

He said the Department of Public Works and Highways would have to shell out its own funds to build a "two-lane, heavy-duty road" next to the interchange.

Abaya said a general survey of the area would be done after the meeting of officials of the BCDA and the Subic-Clark Alliance for Development Council.

He said the construction of the interchange would not alter the schedule of the opening of the SCTEx after March 2008.

Long delay

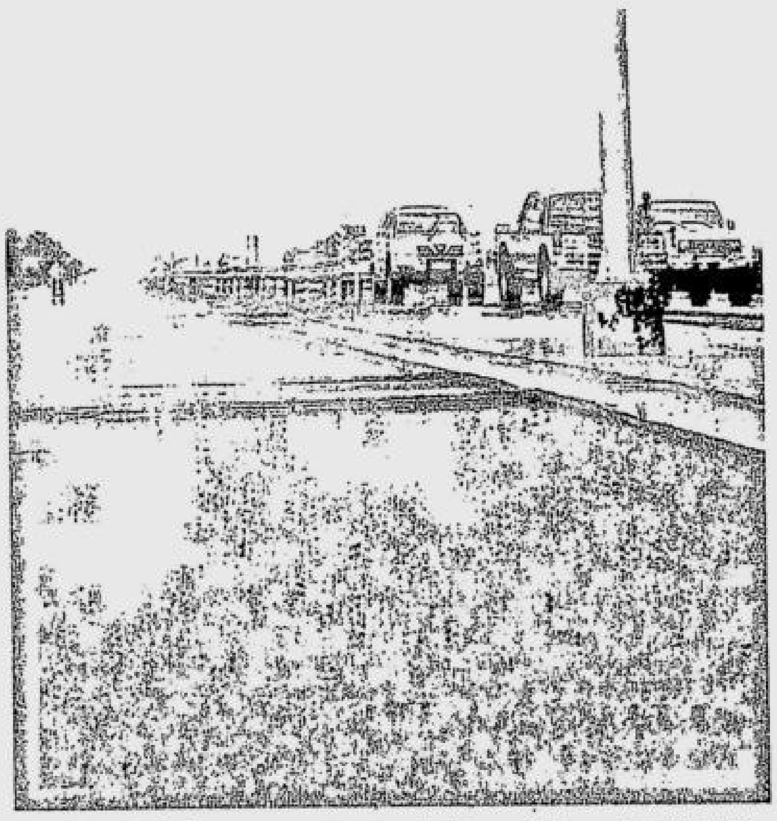
The BCDA has extended the November deadline of the Kajima-Obayashi-JFE Engineering-Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. Joint Venture to March after the Japanese contractor failed to finish its work on time.

It allowed the Aug. 18 deadline of the Hazama-Taisei-Nippon Steel Joint Venture to be stretched for 54 days more until October.

The delay in KOJM's work was attributed to its failure to bring in equipment.

The additional interchange would bring to seven the total number of interchanges along the Pampanga-Tarlac section of the SCTEx. The Bataan-Pampanga has only two interchanges.

Much of the SCTEx interchanges are on the Pampanga-Tarlac side because it is deemed as the "most busy" segment in relation to the movement of cargo and passengers at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark, according to Robert Gervacio, SCTEx manager for operational support. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*



POOR work by Japanese contractors led to asphalt overlays like this on the Concepcion, Tarlac side of the SCTEx that has been ordered repaired by the government. TONETTE OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

2 bombs jar Zambo markets; no one injured

ZAMBOANGA CITY—TWO crude bombs went off 10 minutes apart at the public markets here early yesterday but no injuries were reported, authorities said.

The blasts occurred 14 days after a bomb ripped through Plaza Pershing, injuring 14 people.

Police blamed the terror group Abu Sayyaf for the Aug. 21 blast.

Ely Enriquez, city administrator, said he received a call about an explosion at the public market extension along Saavedra Street around 4:40 a.m.

He said he went there to check when another explosion occurred.

Senior Supt. Manuel Barcena, city police director, said the second explosion occurred at the mid-section of the old public market around 4:55 a.m.

"Still no one was hurt but it damaged some vegetables," he said.

Barcena described the explosions as mild.

"Pieces of evidence showed that improvised explosive devices were used but these were made of crude materials," he said.

Barcena said the main ingredients used in the bombs were ammonium nitrate and petroleum.

Mosquito coils were used to set off the bombs, he said.

Barcena said witnesses reported seeing a young man, probably 19 years old, leave two bags at the blast sites shortly before the explosions.

"We thought the explosions were caused by firecrackers," said Augustina Barredo, a stall owner. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

Gov to probe claims NPA rebs' surrender was fraudulent

ALABEL, SARANGANI—GOV. Miguel Dominguez has pledged to investigate claims that the recent surrender of communist rebels from Alegria, Datal Anggas and Pag-asa villages, as announced by the military, was fraudulent.

Earlier, the military said 99 New People's Army (NPA) rebels and sympathizers decided to join the mainstream of society because of difficulty in living in the hinterlands.

But one of those who was supposed to have surrendered told the INQUIRER they were apparently tricked by the military.

He said on Aug. 30, they were asked anew by the military to come down their villages so that they could legalize their firearms.

Gun owners

He said they were hesitant, as in past attempts to convince them, but they later decided to agree because they wanted to legalize their firearms.

"But I was surprised when they announced that we were rebels. There were some rebels with us but there were only few of them," said the source, who spoke on conditions of anonymity for fear of reprisal from the Army.

He said most of those that the military claimed to be rebels were ordinary villagers, who kept guns for protection.

Dominguez said he will check the list of those who surrendered and he will talk with the military to find out the truth.

> 'I was surprised when they announced that we were rebels...'

Another surrender

In Kidapawan City, authorities announced the surrender of an alleged communist rebel involved in the NPA raid on the police station of Magpet, North Cotabato last year.

Col. Victor Tan, commander of the 39th Infantry Battalion, said Elmer Torres of the NPA's Front 51 based in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur, surrendered with his girlfriend on Aug. 31.

Tan said Torres was among a group of communist rebels that stormed the Magpet town police station in July 2006 and took off with 30 firearms.

In Linamon, Lanao del Norte, police authorities said 60 percent of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels under Abdullah Macapaar, alias Commander Bravo have lain low to raise money for their families.

Livelihood

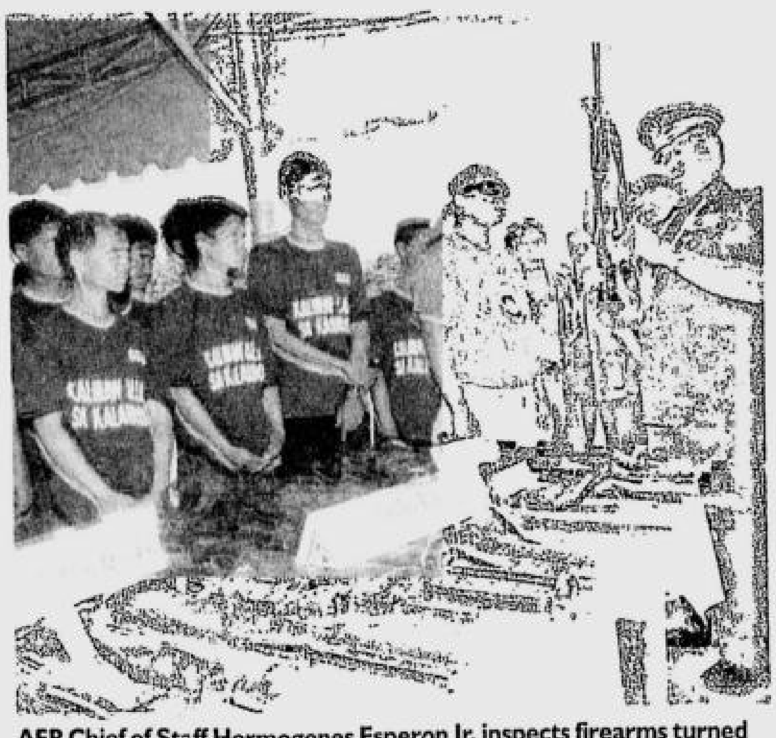
Insp. Karim Ubanay Macarompan, Linamon police chief, told the INQUIRER that Bravo has some 1,000 men under his command.

"Commander Bravo has allowed some of his men to find a living to support their families," Macarompan said.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to contact Bravo.

But a rebel official said it was normal for their men to ensure the financial survival of their families.

"What is wrong with that? Besides, we are not fighting the government because of the ceasefire so they have all the time to make a living. They are on standby and are willing to go back to duty when the situation warrants," said Eid Kabalu, chief of the MILF's civil-military relations. *Aquiles Zonio, Jeoffrey Maitem and Richel Umel, Inquirer Mindanao*



AFP Chief of Staff Hermogenes Esperon Jr. inspects firearms turned over by 99 supposedly NPA guerrillas who surrendered to military authorities. BING GONZALES/INQUIRER MINDANAO

EDWIN BACASMAS

EL SHADDAI'S Bro. Mike Velarde (left) presides over the discussion on the structures and concerns that will guide the Bishops-Legislators caucus in Makati on Tuesday. With him are Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto (left), Speaker Jose de Venecia, Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines president and Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, Senate President Manny Villar and Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Top official confirms gov't eyeing Erap pardon

From page A1

overkill. Why should they expect trouble whatever is the decision of the Sandiganbayan? After all, President Estrada submitted himself to the justice system believing in its fairness," Velarde told the INQUIRER.

The verdict on Estrada, who is under house arrest at his vacation estate in Tanay, Rizal, is expected this month.

"Let's wait and see what the decision will be because we cannot talk about pardon until there is a verdict. After the verdict comes out, maybe we can discuss that," said Puno, who had also served as Estrada's interior secretary.

He refused to comment on a Social Weather Stations survey showing that respondents in Metro Manila and four neighboring provinces were in favor of a presidential pardon for Estrada. *(See related story on Page A11.)*

On Monday, Ms Arroyo appointed Puno to concurrently serve as her adviser on political affairs "indefinitely." Puno replaced National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, who was assigned last week to oversee the political affairs office vacated by Secretary Gabriel Claudio for health reasons.

Lunch meeting

Gonzales yesterday disclosed a lunch meeting last week with Estrada on the latter's invitation, wherein he told the detained ex-President not to listen to parties wanting to launch another destabilization move against the government.

Shrugging off the question of whether Estrada had sought a pardon should the Sandiganbayan verdict be conviction, Gonzales said neither he nor his lunch host had made any commitment, or proposed a deal.

"It was just an exchange of views," Gonzales said upon emerging from a National Security Council Cabinet Group meeting in Malacañang. He said one of the things they discussed was Estrada's dismay at not being able to resolve the communist insurgency during the latter's term.

Gonzales also said Ms Arroyo had nothing to do with the meeting with Estrada, and that he had not even told her about it.

'Not worried'

Gonzales told reporters that he did not see any "real destabilization" happening to coincide with the Sandiganbayan verdict and that, at any rate, authorities were "prepared" to deal with it.

"So I can say we're not worried," he said, adding that he was flying to Australia last night ahead of the President for the Sept. 8-9 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting.

"It's all safe," he said.

Asked whether Ms Arroyo's trip to Australia on Thursday was an indication that everything was okay, Gonzales said: "You can interpret it that way. With that kind of meeting, it will have to be very, very serious to advise her not to go."

Gonzales said he had told Estrada "personally not to listen to those proposing to destabilize the government."

"Naghahanapbuhay lang yan. Sayang lang ang pera niya (They just want to make money. His money will just go to waste)," Gonzales said.

"I told him that in the final analysis, whether he is acquitted or not, his actions after the fact will be, I think, the basis of the judgment by the people.

"It's up to him if he wants to initiate trouble or help to uphold the country's best interest."

Political maturity

Velarde said he believed that Filipinos were "politically mature" and would accept any decision of the Sandiganbayan "for as long as [it] is based not on pressure from any side."

He called on all sectors to stop all speculation on the Estrada verdict, including the possibility of a pardon.

"Everybody should just wait for the decision of the Sandiganbayan. Everything is speculative, as if certain groups are preempting or anticipating or in a way influencing the decision of the Sandiganbayan. I believe the justices will decide on the merits of the case," he said.

Sought for comment on Velarde's "overkill" remark, Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino said in a phone-patch interview with reporters: "We are just being cautious, and what we have in mind is the general interest of the public, to maintain peace, order and stability in the National Capital Region (NCR).

"Even if we overreact, it pays because it's the interest of the people that is at stake."

Dolorfino also said the Armed Forces' deployment of 400 soldiers for antiriot operations on the day the Estrada verdict is to be handed down was not "overkill" because the AFP was also preparing for "all possible contingencies," including destabilization attempts, civil disturbances, terrorism and calamities.

4 companies

Dolorfino, the outgoing chief of the AFP-NCR Command, said two civil disturbance management companies would be posted in the vicinity of the Sandiganbayan and another two, around Malacañang. (One company is composed of around 100 soldiers.)

"The majority of the available forces will just be on standby in their respective camps. In case the situation deteriorates, there are other security measures that we will put in place, like probably conducting checkpoints in major entries leading to the NCR," he said.

Not to be outdone, the Philippine National Police said it would arrest any demonstrator causing trouble on Judgment Day.

PNP Director General Oscar Calderon said he would prefer that pro-Estrada rallies be held in the freedom parks.

"I hope they will not cause any trouble. I wish they will not go to the streets to protest because it will infringe on the rights of other persons ... The moment they cause trouble, we will arrest them. Those are my instructions," Calderon said.

"We expect that the decision will be fair to everybody, so our duty as law enforcers is to ensure that Metro Manila is peaceful. We ask the [demonstrators] to hold their protests in the proper venues," he said.

Amnesty

Besides a presidential pardon, Malacañang has raised the possibility of including Estrada in an amnesty program.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had earlier told the INQUIRER that the Palace was putting together a general amnesty for all "enemies of the state."

He said that since the Ramos administration, no such amnesty proclamation had been sent to Congress.

"Now as part of the peace process, we feel that it will be very helpful that those fighting the government will be looking forward to that, especially if they know the government will give them a second (chance) ... so they become good citizens," Ermita said.

In an earlier interview, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, who took a leave from work for health reasons last week, said: "It's a prerogative both of the President and Congress, so the President cannot have amnesty without Congress approving it."

Speaker Jose de Venecia has also proposed amnesty, not a pardon, for Estrada. ***With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Nikko Dizon and Alcuin Papa***

Beliefs, not money, behind Couples split

From page A1

Kalinga, CfC's hugely successful housing program, admitted, however, that the allegations of mismanaged funds had been made by the group of Frank Padilla, one of the cofounders of CfC in 1981.

But the allegations were "all said in general," Tale said yesterday at the Bulong Pulungan forum in Manila. "Maybe if there was something specific [mentioned], we can properly respond."

Padilla is in the process of forming a new group—the CfC Foundation for Family and Life.

Tale said the main issue that had caused the rift within CfC was not so much money as the differences in the members' beliefs in their work and mission.

"Substantially, it was the fundamental differences in the way we see the kind of work we are doing for the group ... People are called differently to pursue different tasks," he said.

Transparency

Gawad Kalinga finance head Mike Goco also said in an interview that despite the allegations of fund mismanagement, "the money part is a small issue."

He added: "Even the bishops [who had met with CfC in an attempt to defuse the mounting tensions among its members] said that it was not about the money."

Tale pointed out that the management of funds donated to Gawad Kalinga had been and continued to be transparent. He said those who wished to look into the matter needed only to check the Gawad Kalinga website.

Goco said the accounting firm Isla Lipana & Co., a member of the accounting giant PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, had been auditing Gawad Kalinga since Day One.

On top of this and as part of the process of transparency, Gawad Kalinga recently sought the assistance of another top auditing firm, Sycip Gorres & Velayo (SGV), to conduct another audit of the housing program's processes and identify possible areas for improvement.

Goco said the SGV findings, which included a few suggestions for improvement, were generally positive.

Accountability

In an earlier interview, Nonong Contreras, one of the four members of the CfC interim committee and a former member of the Board of Elders of the International Council of the CfC Foundation for Family and Life, said they had not accused Gawad Kalinga of mishandling fund donations.

"Never did we say that there's an anomaly. We only said there should be proper governance and accountability," he said, adding:

"When the money you are handling is not yours, there should be greater governance and accountability. The disbursements should jibe with the number of houses promised to partners."

Contreras said he and his group had raised the issue of proper accountability because of instances when some Gawad Kalinga partners complained directly to their group about purported mismanagement of the donated funds.

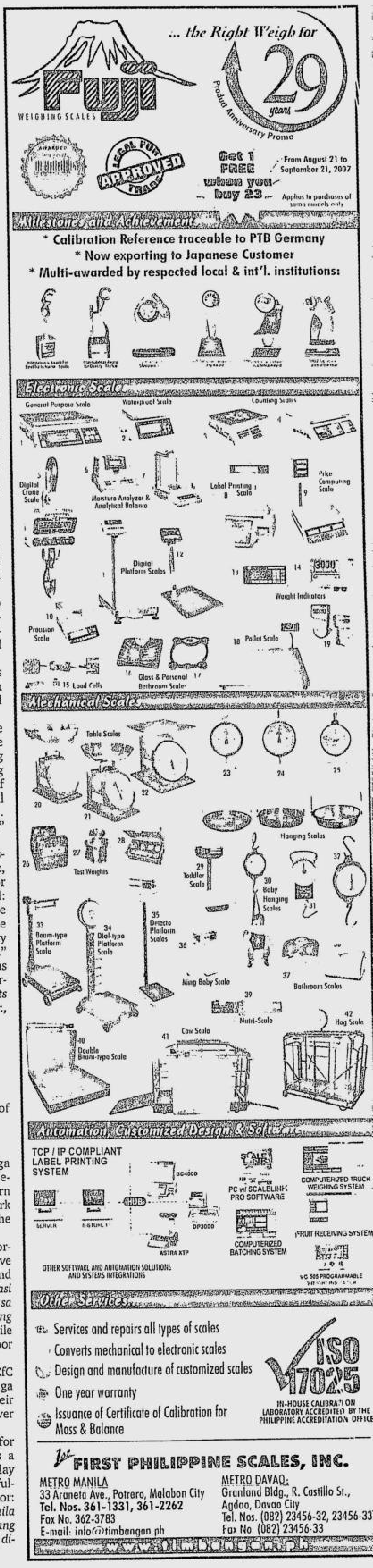
Commitment

According to Gawad Kalinga executive director Luis Oquinena, the group's current concern is to continue with the work that it set out to do with the housing program.

"The issue is bigger than [former Gawad Kalinga executive director Antonio] Meloto and Padilla," Oquinena said. *"Kasi habang nagkakagulo tayo dito sa taas, yung mga mahihirap ang naaapektuhan sa ibaba* (While the officers are fighting, the poor are the ones affected)."

Oquinena cited reports of CfC volunteers in Gawad Kalinga communities who had left their posts because of confusion over the split.

He said it was important for Gawad Kalinga and CfC as a whole to announce the lay movement's commitment to fulfill its mandate to help the poor: *"Mahalagang ipaalam sa kanila na sa Gawad Kalinga, walang iwanan. Tulong tulong tayo dito."*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NSC approves amnesty for Reds

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL yesterday formally approved the grant of amnesty to communist rebels who will be willing to lay down their arms, a move expected to hasten the conclusion of the stalled peace negotiations with the communist National Democratic Front (NDF).

The amnesty, to be issued by presidential proclamation, could also cover party-list representatives charged with rebellion for their alleged involvement in a conspiracy to overthrow the government in February 2006, according to Jesus Dureza, the presidential adviser for peace, and national security adviser Norberto Gonzales.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who presided over the NSC meeting, said Congress would need to appropriate an initial P500 million to bankroll a nationwide amnesty program.

She said the money would "hasten a stable peace and security in the region, with the local and religious officials at the helm, supported by the entire national government."

Amnesty livelihood

"Included in the peace framework are amnesty and livelihood for the rebels who will return to the fold of the law," said Ms Arroyo in Filipino.

"This is what this country needs: reforms in the economy, peace and stable politics," said the President, calling on the nation to "unite" to end political bickering, instability and rebellions that have discouraged foreign investments.

Dureza told reporters that the amnesty must be "concurred in" by both chambers of Congress for it to be legal and binding.

"The President issues the proclamation after which it goes to Congress for further deliberation, and then concurrence by majority vote," he said.

He said the NSC meeting, which was followed by a full Cabinet meeting, has already wrapped up discussions on the planned amnesty for the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The NDF, headed by CPP founder Jose Ma. Sison and Luis Jalandoni, is the political arm of the CPP-NPA.

"I think the amnesty issue has already been pretty much agreed upon. It's a matter of finalizing the document which the President has directed Secretary Dureza to undertake because the NSC cluster has already basically approved the amnesty recommendation for the President," said Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno.

No ceasefire

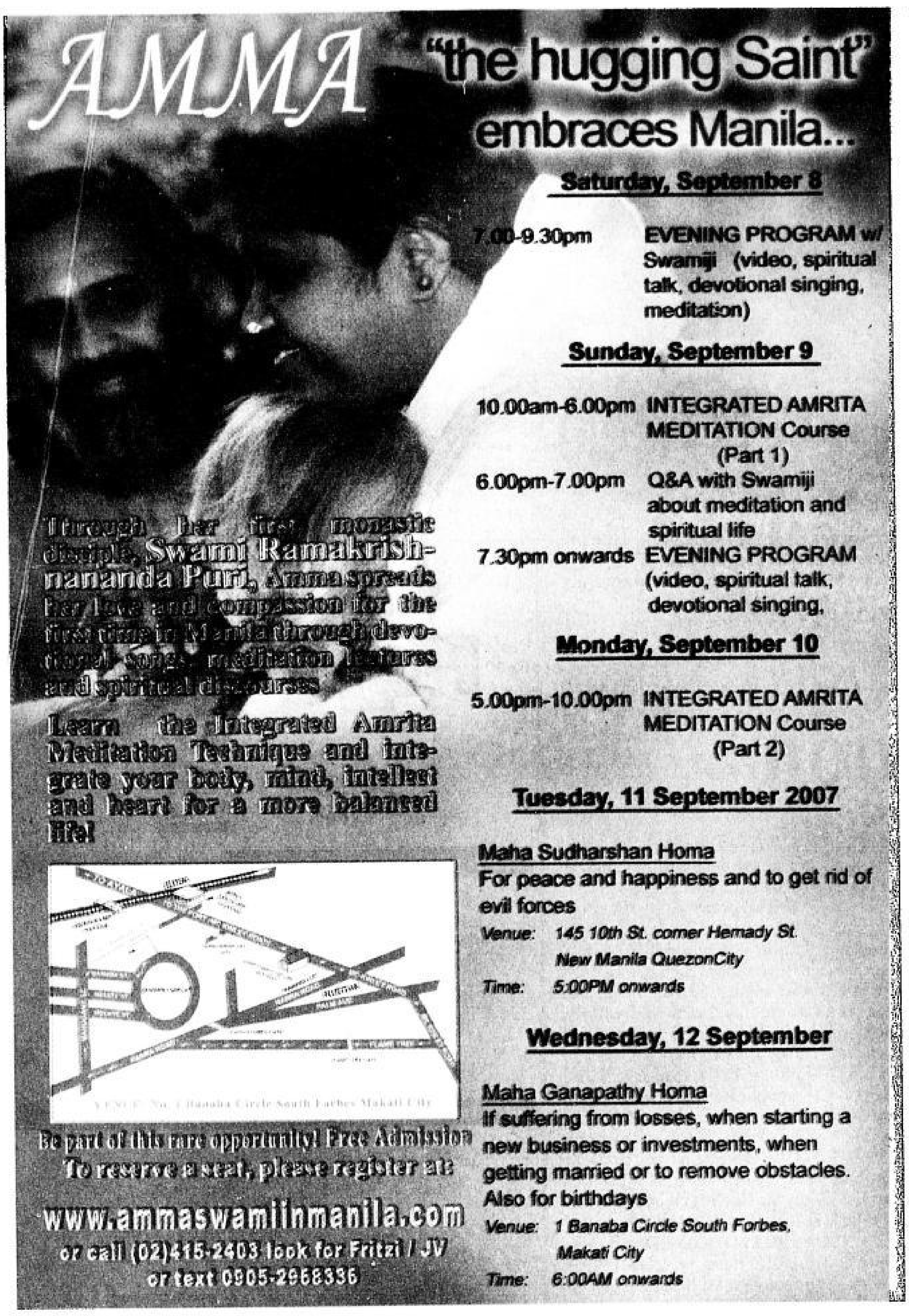
Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said he was for amnesty for the communists but only if they surrender their arms and denounce the armed struggle.

He ruled out any ceasefire once the amnesty law goes into effect.

"There will be no ceasefire as far as I understand. If they [the communists] want to take advantage of the social integration program, then all they have to do is apply for it, [and] surrender their firearms. Then they will be given livelihood assistance," said Esperon.

Dureza, who was given the task of drafting the amnesty proclamation, said those to be amnestied are members of the "CPP-NPA-NDF and other communist rebel groups."

He said the amnesty could extend to leftist party-list representatives led by Satur Ocampo of the Bayan Muna party-list group as it would cover the rebellion and other crimes relating to "the pursuit of political beliefs."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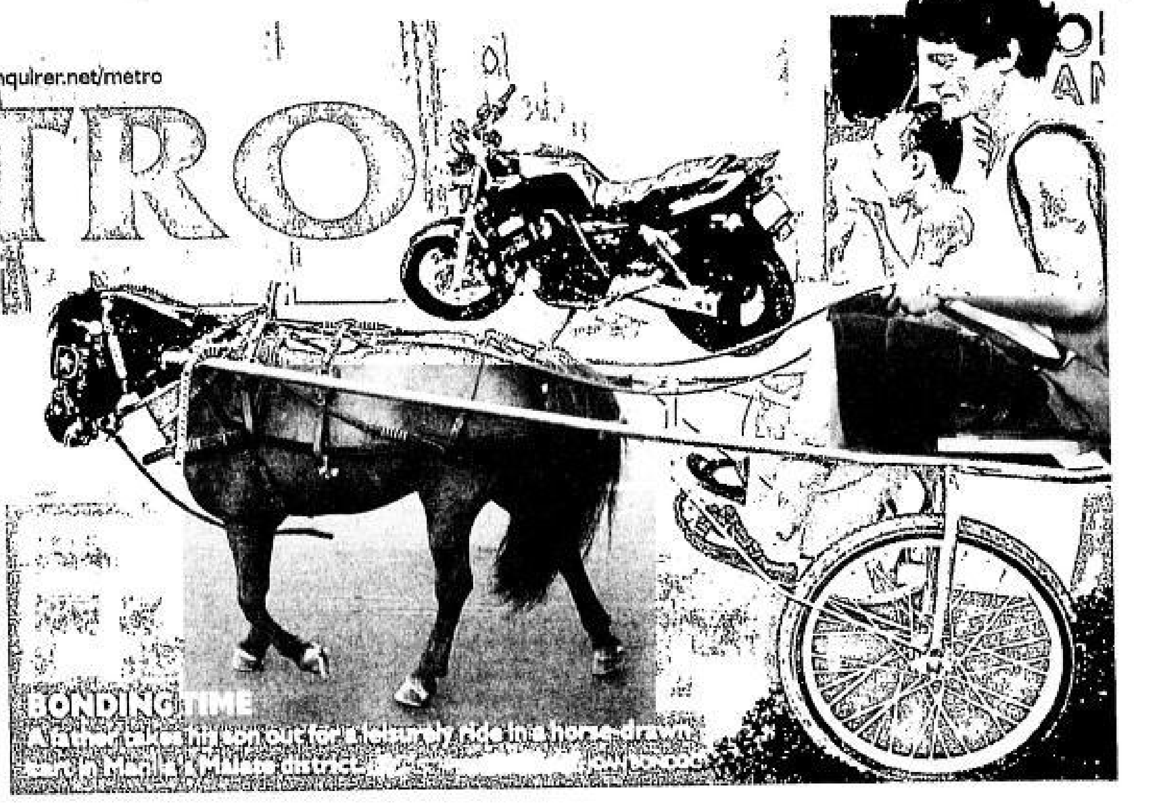


BONDING TIME
A father takes his son out for a leisurely ride in a horse-drawn carriage in Manila's Malate district. [illegible]

Pasig loses claim to Meralco tax

'No ordinance filed to back demand'

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE PASIG CITY GOVERNMENT HAS LOST ITS BID TO CLAIM P435 million in franchise tax from the Manila Electric Company because it did not have a valid ordinance to support its demand.

In its Aug. 28 decision, the Court of Appeals overturned the ruling of a lower court which declared as valid the city government's demand for the payment of the franchise tax from 1996 to 1999, saying there was no legal basis for its collection since there was no ordinance mandating it.

The appellate court pointed out that the demand for payment was based on Section 32, Article 3 of Ordinance 25 which was issued in 1992 when Pasig was still a municipality. Under the ordinance, all business ventures carried out through a franchise were required to franchise taxes to the local government.

But the ordinance was later nullified since municipalities are not empowered to impose and collect the tax. Cities, on the other hand, are allowed to collect franchise taxes under the local government code.

According to the court, Pasig's subsequent conversion into a city did not mean that it could automatically collect the tax since it did not enact an ordinance authorizing it to do so.

"Here, it is not disputed that since Pasig was converted into a city, it has not enacted a new ordinance for the imposition of a franchise tax ... Since the Municipality of Pasig had no authority to enact the said ordinance, it could not be a valid basis for the City of Pasig to assess and collect the franchise tax in question," the court said.

It pointed out that Republic Act 7829, which turned Pasig into a city, did not contain a provision that would validate Ordinance 25.

"Simply put, there is nothing in section 45 of RA 7829 that validates the ordinance in question; thus section 32, article 3 of said ordinance remains illegal, without force and effect. Therefore, until an appropriate ordinance is enacted by the legislative body of the City of Pasig, it is without legal ground to demand from the appellant the payment of a franchise tax," the court said.

Doctor who brought Cris to hospital to show up at NBI

By Tina G. Santos, Jeannette I. Andrade and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.,
Inquirer Southern Luzon

THE DOCTOR WHO BROUGHT SUSPECTed hazing victim Cris Anthony Mendez to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City yesterday said he would present himself to the National Bureau of Investigation today.

Special Investigator III Roger LA Sususco of the NBI Anti-Terrorism Division said Dr. Francisco Cruz Jr., the assistant chief of the VMMC ophthalmology department, gave them this assurance when they served him a subpoena in his house in Quezon City.

Sususco said they also served a subpoena on Andoni Santos, said to be a member of the Sigma Rho fraternity, the group Mendez, a student of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, reportedly joined before his death.

Mendez was brought to the hospital by Cruz and several other people on Aug. 27. He was declared dead on arrival and the findings of an autopsy report showed that he was beaten up quite badly because of the numerous bruises all over his body.

Also expected to appear before the NBI at around 10 a.m. today are Dr. Daphne Gascon, the VMMC doctor who examined him and Ariel Paolo Ante, the National College of Public Administration and Governance student council chair and Sigma Rho member who was reportedly the last person seen with Mendez when he was still alive.

Recruited

According to the bureau, they received information that it was Ante who recruited Mendez into the fraternity.

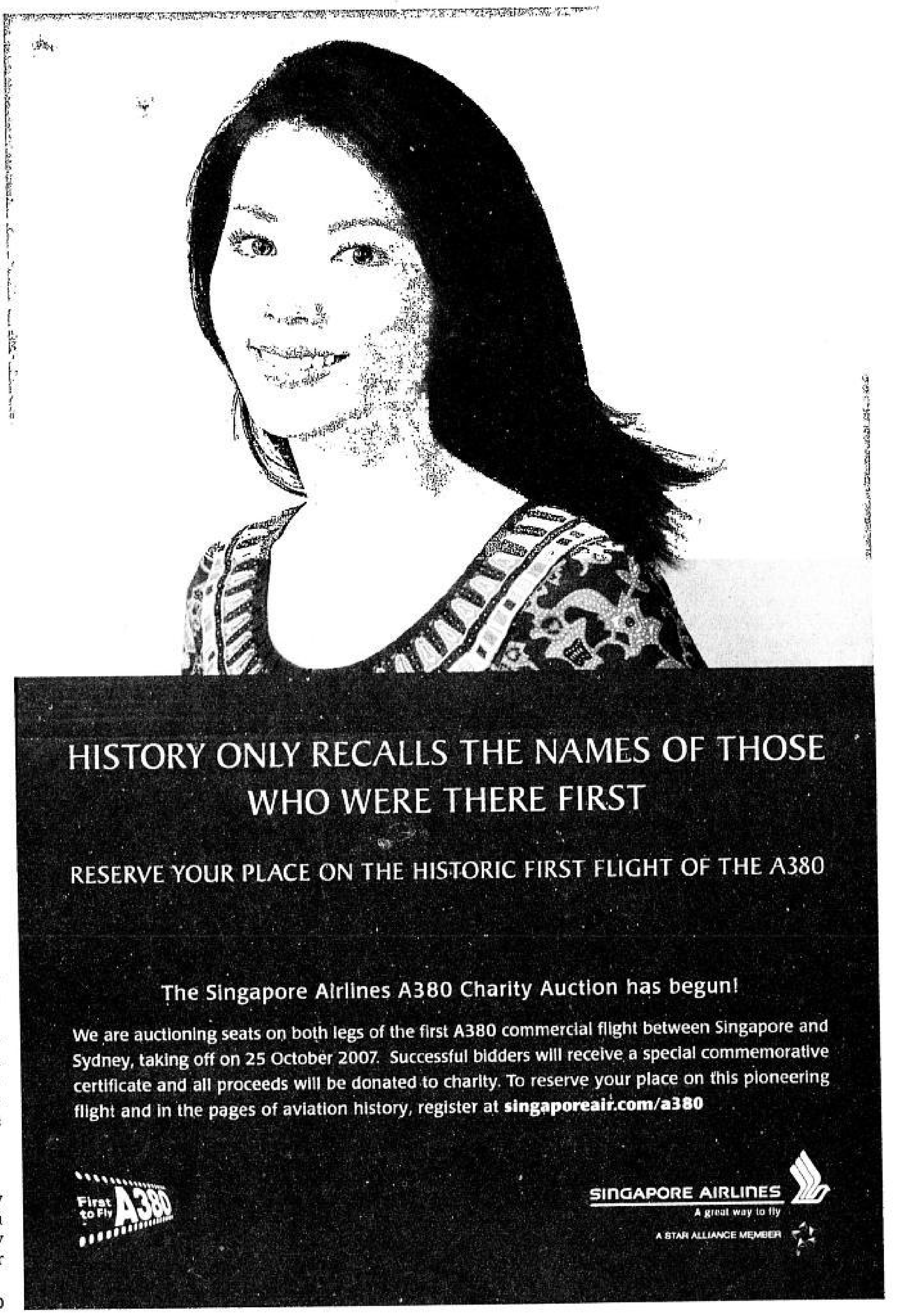
Sususco explained, however, that they were not considering Cruz and the others as suspects.

"They are merely sources of vital information. We invited them to shed light on the case. It's up to them if they want to come. At least we gave them the chance. They can't blame us that we did not give them the chance to air their side," he said.

Initiation

A member of the Sigma Rho yesterday told the police that he saw Mendez in a house in Quezon City where the fraternity was allegedly conducting initiation rites for neophytes.

DOCTOR/ A20



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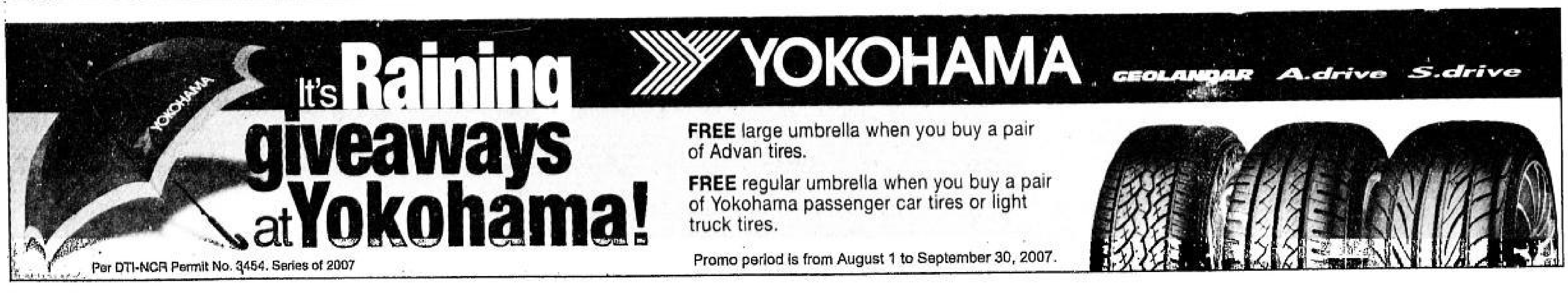

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Dump truck slams into Makati City house; 11 hurt

By DJ Yap

A QUIET EVENING IN A MAKATI City household turned into a night of tragedy when a 10-wheeler truck plowed into a house in East Rembo, causing injuries to 11 people, including two baby girls.

Eight of those injured were occupants of the house at 105-G 6th Avenue. A wall of the two-story structure collapsed because of the impact, police said. The truck driver and two of his helpers were also hurt in the incident.

The victims were Noel Memita, 24; his wife Maria Mae, 19; their 2-month-old daughter Maria Lowela; Charito Calugay, 32; her children Charlyn, 7; Cherry Ann, 6; and 6-month-old Charmel; Melanie Caroscay, 28; driver Dennis Borga, 32; and his helpers, Benjo Reanbonanza, 19 and Rizalino Barnuevo, 36.

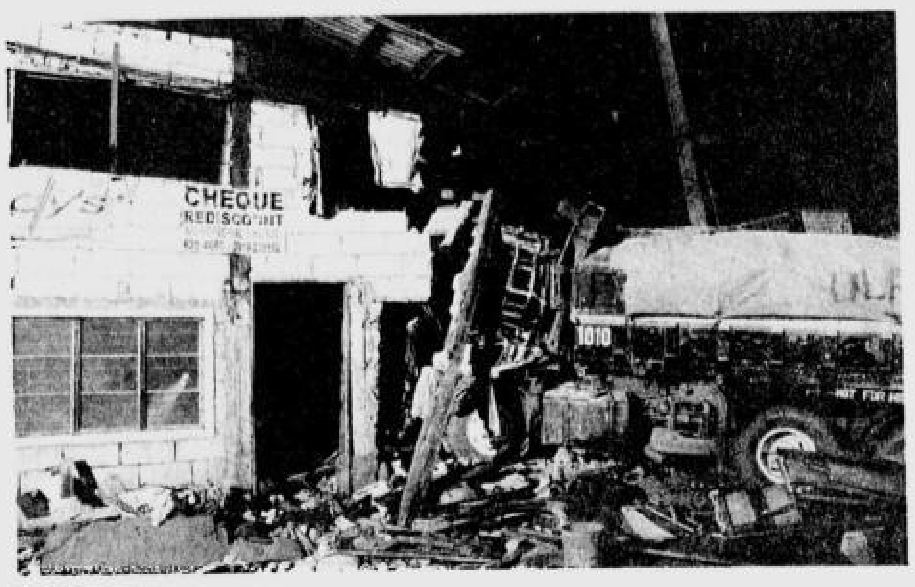
It took rescue workers three hours to retrieve all the victims from the rubble and rush them to the Ospital ng Makati, said SPO2 Mike Descalzo of the city police's traffic enforcement unit.

Fortunately, most of them, including the girls, suffered only scratches and bruising, Descalzon said. Except for Noel Memita, who remained under observation, all were in stable condition, he added.

A report said Borga was driving a dump truck loaded with sand and gravel on the southbound lane of C-5 Road and headed toward South Superhighway when a passenger jeep cut him off at an intersection.

Trying to avoid the jeepney, Borga maneuvered to the left, but he lost control of the vehicle and crashed into the Memitas' house.

Descalzo said charges of reckless imprudence resulting in multiple physical injuries and damage to property were being readied against Borga.



A WAYWARD truck plows into a house on C-5 Road corner Kalayaan Avenue in Makati City, injuring family members who were having a quiet dinner before tragedy struck.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Manila policemen go on mall tour—of a different kind

By Tina G. Santos

MEMBERS OF THE MANILA Police District are in the middle of a mall tour—not to check out what's on sale but to teach watchmen how to detect the presence of bombs in their establishments.

Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa, acting MPD chief, said members of the Explosives and Ordnance Division were now going around department stores to conduct lectures about bomb ingredients and components.

The police in Metro Manila have been on full alert for weeks as a precaution against possible terrorist attacks in the metropolis after the military launched an offensive against the Abu Sayyaf in Mindanao.

"Security officers are being taught about the types of wires and electronic components that are usually used in bomb making and assembly," Abarzosa said.

A bomb expert said they were dismayed to discover that mall guards do not know what they are looking for when they check the bags of customers, usually with a stick.

Samuel Sentero, 45, a guard at a Manila mall who attended the MPD seminar, said he and the other guards would now be able to conduct a more thorough inspection of customers' bags, although this could result in longer lines at the entrance of establishments. "But we don't care if the mall goers complain," Sentero said. "We're only doing our job and this is for their own good. It's as simple as that."

After the mall tour, the MPD will conduct a "campus tour," this time, targeting the guards detailed in schools.

Moreno hasn't dropped the habit, but will strictly enforce smoking ban

By Allison W. Lopez

MORENO

ALTHOUGH IT COULD BE hard for a smoker like him, Manila Vice Mayor Isko Moreno yesterday promised to enforce a ban on smoking inside City Hall as ordered by Mayor Alfredo Lim.

"As the father of the City Council and acting mayor, I will follow the order. It will start with us," said Moreno, who admitted to smoking nearly a pack of cigarettes every day.

Apart from Moreno, several other members of the City Council also smoke. Some of them have been spotted by reporters puffing on a cigarette outside the session hall during breaks.

Lim said on Monday that it was time for City Hall to become smoke-free to promote wellness among its employees and visitors.

The mayor is currently in China for a business meeting and will be back on Sept. 9.

Moreno said he will begin limiting his smoking to certain areas like his ventilated office or the toilet.

He added that he would ask the City Hall security guards and the police to strictly enforce the ban which is backed by a 1991 ordinance banning smoking in public places.

Moreno said Ordinance No. 7748, which prohibits smoking in specific places like public utility vehicles, hospitals, schools and conference rooms where more than two persons congregate, was still valid despite the lack of implementation.

Signed during the term of then Manila Mayor Mel Lopez, the ordinance penalizes violators with a fine of P300 or imprisonment of not more than two days.

"We already created an oversight committee to see to it that all the ordinances are followed. The ordinance on smoking was probably not implemented by previous administrations," said Moreno who acknowledged that there were other ordinances which were also not being followed.

He, however, clarified that the sale of cigarettes was not banned in City Hall since the ordinance defined smoking as "carrying a lighted cigar, cigarette, or pipe or other smoking paraphernalia, whether or not it is being puffed, smoked or inhaled."

Suspected gunman in QC barangay official's slay faces murder raps

By Margaux C. Ortiz

MURDER CHARGES HAVE been filed in the Quezon City Regional Trial Court against a 53-year-old man accused of shooting to death a Quezon City barangay captain last month.

Assistant City Prosecutor Barbara Aleli Briones recommended no bail for Jose Peralta's temporary liberty.

The resolution of the case is the result of continued police operations and positive identification by witnesses that the respondent committed the crime, Briones said.

Peralta was arrested in a follow-up operation on Aug. 25, 2007 for allegedly shooting Barangay Central chief Ronnie Sicat while the latter was presiding over a meeting in July.

Court records showed that Peralta suddenly barged in the room and shot the victim in the face and body with a caliber .45 pistol. Peralta then fled on a black motorcycle, while two of his still unidentified accomplices immediately boarded a passenger jeepney.

A police "asset" told investigators during follow-up operations that she overheard the suspect brag to his companions that he shot someone in Barangay Central the previous week. Another witness told authorities that Peralta was a resident of Barangay Botocan in Quezon City.

Peralta was finally arrested after a concerned citizen called up the police and said the suspect was seen with a gun tucked in his waist while playing billiards. Peralta was positively identified by at least three witnesses.

At the time of his death, Sicat was among the longest-serving elected public servants of Barangay Central, having served the area for 13 years.

Defective weighing scales seized in 2 Muntinlupa markets

By Julie M. Aurelio

OVER 120 DEFECTIVE AND ILlegal weighing scales were confiscated from two public markets in Muntinlupa City over the weekend.

A total of 63 weighing scales were seized from vendors at the Alabang public market while 62 others were confiscated from the Poblacion public market.

Muntinlupa Mayor Aldrin San Pedro ordered the crackdown, dubbed "Operation Timabangan," to shield consumers from unscrupulous vendors in the city's public markets.

"This is to protect consumers against vendors who take advantage of their customers just to earn more," San Pedro said.

The seized weighing scales either had no official seals or were found to have been tampered with, a violation of Municipal Ordinance 92-16, he added.

Meanwhile, the Muntinlupa City public market has posted a 60 percent increase in its monthly collection from vendors since July.

Doroteo Martin, market administrator, said that from P2.1 million a month, they now collect P3.3 million from their 1,447 stall holders. The public market is wholly owned and operated by the city government.

San Pedro lauded the increase in the public market's monthly revenues, adding that the additional income would be used to fund city projects.

"The new management of the public market has stepped up its efforts to increase the daily collection. We are also identifying other potential sources of revenues for the city government," the mayor said.

Among the new policies implemented at the market was the installation of electric submeters in each stall to prevent the theft of electricity among vendors who would install additional appliances without informing market officials.

METROBRIEFS

Man shot dead in QC

THE SOUND of gunfire led to the discovery of the body of a 23-year-old man on Monday night. Residents of the Fairmont Subdivision in North Fairview, Quezon City, found the body of Teting Ganoy, their neighbor, on Baker Street. He had been shot several times. PO2 Edwin de la Cruz of the Quezon City Police District said that they found three empty cal. .45 pistol shells at the site. De la Cruz said that the victim's brother told them Ganoy had argued last week with another man who might have gotten back at him.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Isko slams MMDA

MANILA Vice Mayor Isko Moreno yesterday said the Bureau of Fire Protection and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority should just focus on their work instead of putting the heat on fire volunteers. Moreno, the city's acting mayor, was referring to a recent meeting called by MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando with BFP officials and fire volunteers. During the meeting, a memorandum was drafted requiring volunteers to first seek clearance from the BFP before responding to fires. "The MMDA has no authority over fire volunteers," Moreno said. "During incidents of fire, calamities and other emergency situations, we should welcome everyone who wants to help, whether it be from the government or private sector," he added. But Sgt. Manolito Laroza, chief of the BFP Manila public information office, said the proposed memorandum was aimed at improving coordination and the monitoring of fire volunteer groups. Laroza said that right now, fire volunteers do not submit fire operation reports nor do they disclose their initial findings to arson investigators. "It will help us in resolving cases of fire if they submit a report or at least speak with arson investigators. If they arrived at the scene first, they can tell us the color of the fire, the smell so that we will have an idea how it started," he added.

Allison W. Lopez

Benefit concert set

PHOEBE Angeline Cepeda, a nurse and former Miss De Los Santos-STI, has been battling non Hodgkin's lymphoma, a cancer of the blood which spreads through the lymphatic channels to the spleen and bloodstream. She needs to immediately undergo bone marrow transplant after her normal blood cells were destroyed by chemotherapy and radiation. To raise the huge amount needed for her operation, the DLS-STI Batch 2005 led by its president Jeffrey Lamson is holding a benefit concert for Phoebe titled "Live Strong, One Love." It will be held on Sept. 11, 12 and 13 at 6 p.m. in Ratsky, Tomas Morato, Quezon City. Donations are also accepted at any Bank of Commerce branch (account no. 028-20-003039-9 PHP) Please call Marc Cepeda at 0928-3948596 or 4217567 for more information.

DID YOU KNOW

SPANISH writer Miguel Morayta, after whom a street in Manila was named, was born on Sept. 3, 1834 in Madrid, Spain. He was a staunch advocate of the Propaganda Movement and was a founder of the Asociacion Hispano-Filipino.

The street in Manila has been renamed Nicanor Reyes Street, after the founder of Far Eastern University.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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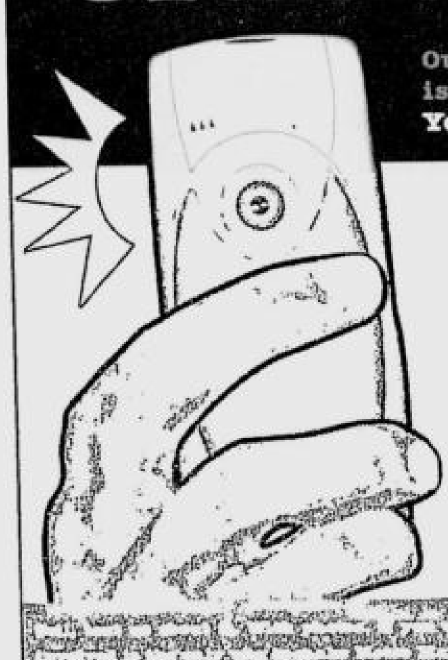


Arraignment of Boratong, three others in murder case deferred

By Kristine L. Alave

A PASIG CITY COURT JUDGE YESTERday deferred the arraignment of Amin Imam Boratong and his other co-defendants who are facing murder charges for the death of a television informant in 2005.

Judge Nicanor Manalo Jr. of Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 161 cancelled the arraignment pending the resolution of a defense motion for him to reverse his July 18 order to try the case despite the justice department's motion to withdraw the information on the case.

Boratong and his wife, Memie, along with former policeman Ramil Along and Nasser Labay, have been linked to the death of German Colisao, a television network informant, in November 2005.

The Boratong couple were also charged with owning and operating a drug den in Pasig City that the police raided and demolished last year. Amin has been detained at the National Bureau of Investigation while Memie's whereabouts are unknown.

Manalo did not set the date for the arraignment. He also gave the Eastern Police District and the other parties 10 days to comment on the defense's motion to move the arraignment and recall the warrants of arrest issued against the accused.

Doctor who brought Cris . . .

From page A19

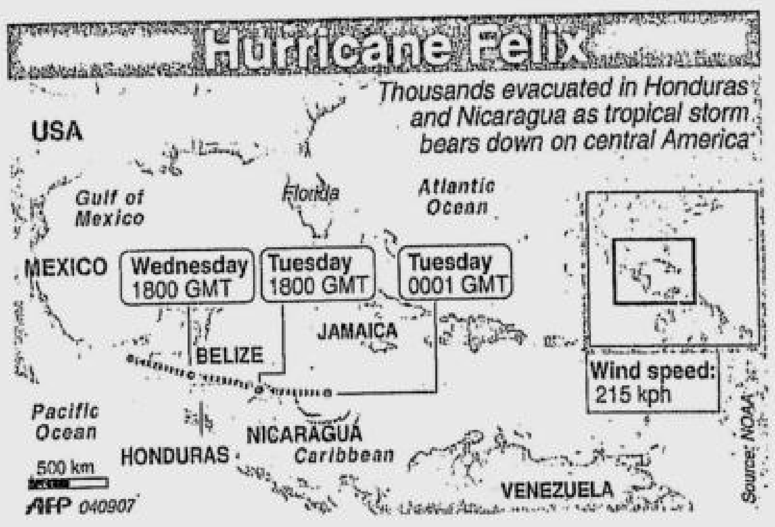
Police investigators did not identify the fraternity member who said that there were at least nine people, including Mendez, who were present during the rites which were held in Barangay Pasong Tamo, Pingkian.

Chief Insp. Lino Banaag of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit said that although the information provided by the witness was useful, they still had to verify and countercheck it against the evidence they had already uncovered.

The family of Mendez, meanwhile, called on those involved in his death to come forward and face the consequences of their action, lawyer Expectacion Baldeo said.

"Have pity on Cris' family. Come out and reveal the truth," Baldeo said in a phone interview from Tiaong, Quezon, the victim's hometown where he was buried.

C. America braces for strong hurricane



TEGUCIGALPA—TENS OF thousands of people hunkered in storm shelters on Tuesday as Hurricane Felix roared toward Central America, but transport shortages left many facing the storm's whipping winds and rain in their homes.

The highly dangerous Category 4 hurricane, due to make landfall around mid-morning, was strengthening as it charged toward Honduras and Nicaragua with top sustained winds near 240 kph, provoking fears of a repeat of Hurricane Mitch, which killed some 10,000 people in Central America in 1998.

"There could be serious damage and material, like human, losses, if people do not take precautionary measures," Honduran President Manuel Zelaya warned.

Up to 40,000 Hondurans were evacuated to shelters, but some 15,000 people were unable to find transportation and were forced to ride out the storm in their homes.

"They couldn't be evacuated because there is no fuel to take them to safe areas," said Carolina Echeverria, a deputy from Cabo Gracias a Dios on the border with Nicaragua, where Felix was headed.

Hundreds of tourists were flown to the Honduran mainland from beach and diving resorts on the Bay Islands, and police reported long lines at supermarkets and gas stations in coastal cities as residents stocked up on food, water and fuel.

A storm surge of up to 5.5 m was expected.

Emergency workers sailed thousands of Miskito Indians out of sparsely populated, coastal areas near the border, dotted with lagoons and crocodile-infested rivers. The turtle-fishing Miskitos formed a British protectorate until the 19th century.

Some 35,000 live in Honduras, and over 100,000 in Nicaragua.

Felix, the second hurricane of the 2007 Atlantic season, had been a top-ranked Category 5 storm like Hurricane Dean, which killed 27 people in the Caribbean and Mexico in August.

As of 2 a.m. EDT, the US National Hurricane center said Felix was 165 km east-southeast of Cabo Gracias a Dios and expected to make landfall within the next few hours. *Reuters*

Panama begins $5.25-B canal expansion project

PANAMA CITY—CONSTRUCTION got underway on Monday on a $5.25 billion project to improve and expand the Panama Canal, considered one of the world's engineering wonders.

The project will double the capacity of the 80-kilometer canal, built 1904-1914 by the United States, which relinquished control of the waterway to Panama in December 1999.

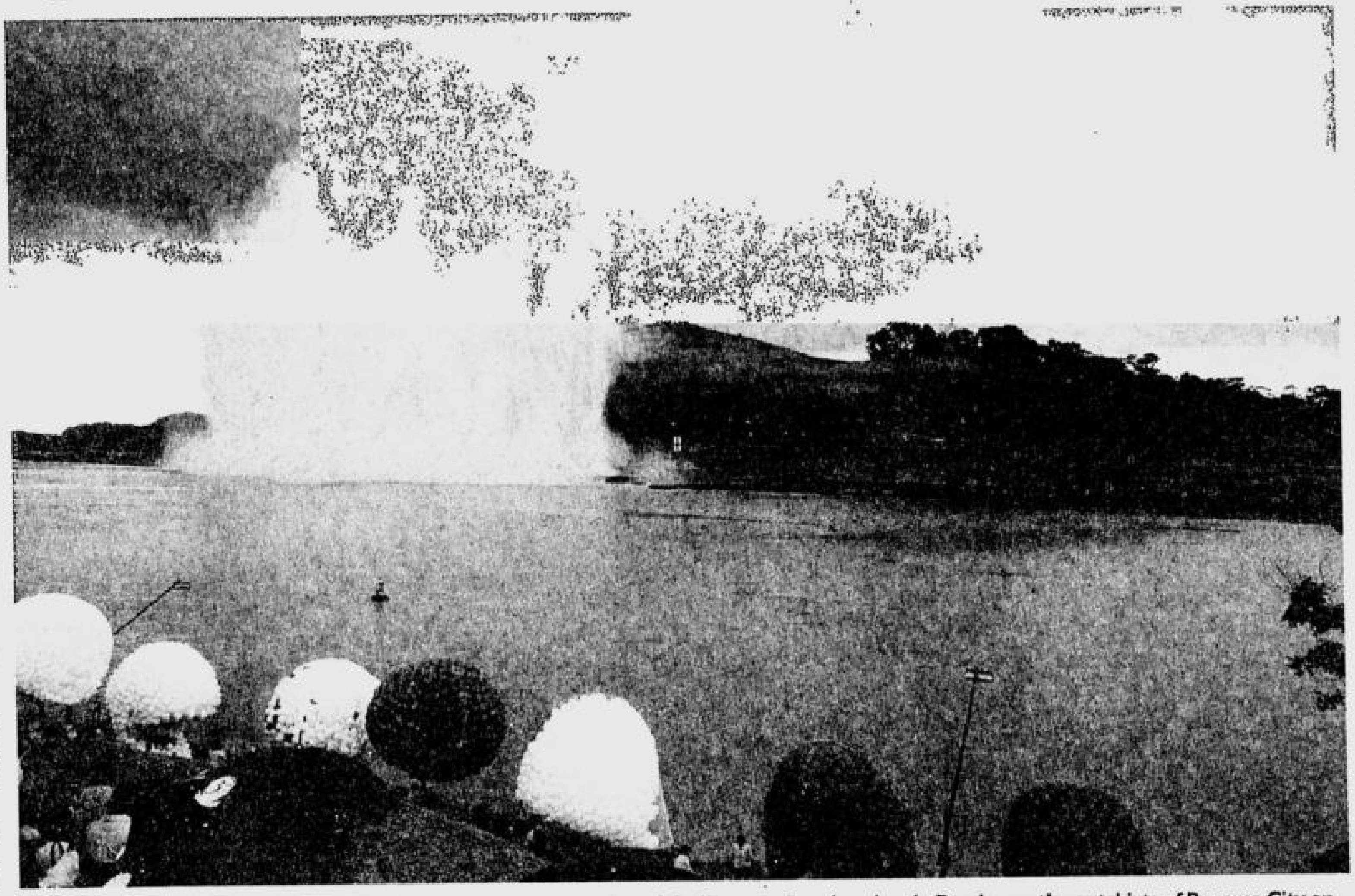
Panamanian President Martin Torrijos on Monday hosted former US president Jimmy Carter at a ceremony marking the start of the expansion, which is expected to take 10 years to complete.

Also attending the ceremony were Jose Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Salvadoran President Elias Saca and Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega.

The project, which will build a third set of locks on the Atlantic and Pacific sides of the waterway, will ensure that today's supersize container ships, cruise liners and oil tankers—many of which are too wide for the canal—will be able to navigate the waterway in the future.

The largest ships that now use the canal carry as many as 5,000 containers, but future supertankers and ships carrying as many as 12,000 containers can use the canal.

Monday's ceremony falls on the 30th anniversary of the 1997 signing of an agreement between then-US President Carter and Panama's head of government, Gen. Omar Torrijos—the current president's father—that put the canal under Panamanian control.



A CONTROLLED explosion marks the beginning of the expansion of the Panama Canal project in Paraiso on the outskirts of Panama City on Monday, Sept. 3. AP

Schools and government offices were closed on Monday, as Torrijos has urged Panamanians to participate in the public events marking the day.

Some 50,000 people attended according to officials and local media, despite expected heavy weather as Caribbean Hurricane Felix headed for the region.

Some 14,000 ships, comprising about five percent of annual world commerce, pass through the Central American shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans—avoiding the arduous and costly journey around South America.

Some 80 percent of Panama's economy is linked to canal activity, amounting to some $6 billion, or 80 percent of Panama's gross domestic product.

The waterway's main users are the United States, China and Japan.

The third set of locks, parallel to the existing two, would accommodate massive vessels 366 meters in length, 49 meters wide and with a 15-meter draft.

Today, the so-called post-Panamax ships—too wide and too long for the Panama Canal—must circle Cape Horn at the southern tip of South America to pass between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans.

The government says work would be financed by a hike in tolls, worth $1.2 billion in 2005.

Panamanian authorities say the project will directly generate 7,000 jobs, and indirectly 35,000. *AFP*

N. Korea expects out of terror list

SEOUL—NORTH KOREA SAID on Monday the United States had agreed to remove it from its list of countries that support terrorism, a move Pyongyang has long sought to receive more aid and hopefully end its status as a global pariah.

The chief US negotiator has hinted that Washington could remove North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism before it completely gives up its nuclear arms program.

But his government has not said it has decided to strike Pyongyang from the list, which currently also includes Cuba, Iran, Sudan and Syria.

North Korea said it agreed in talks at the weekend in Geneva with the United States to take "practical measures to neutralize the existing nuclear facilities in the DPRK (North Korea) within this year," its KCNA news agency quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesperson as saying.

"In return for this, the US decided to take such political and economic measures for compensation as delisting the DPRK as a terrorism sponsor and lifting all sanctions that have been applied according to the Trading with the Enemy Act," the unnamed spokesperson was cited as saying. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

Pakistan blasts kill 24

RAWALPINDI—Suspected suicide bombings tore through a bus carrying Pakistani defense workers on Tuesday in the garrison city of Rawalpindi and a market minutes later, killing 24 people, officials said. "Both appear to be suicide attacks," chief military spokesperson Maj. Gen. Waheed Arshad told AFP. He said that 24 people were killed in the two blasts and that 66 were wounded. The first bombing tore apart a bus taking defense employees to work, leaving 16 of them dead and more than dozen wounded, government interior secretary Kamal Shah said. The second blast happened about 3 kilometers away in the city's crowded R.A. bazaar, killing at least eight people, Shah said. *AFP*

Pension scandal hits Japan

TOKYO—Japanese pension officials have embezzled more than 300 million yen ($2.59 million) from the government since 1963, according to new reports, a finding that could further damage public trust in the nation's pension system. The Social Insurance Agency, which oversees Japan's pension systems, issued the reports on Monday following a government request amid a widening pension scandal. The agency probe came after the government acknowledged earlier this year that it had lost track of pension records linked to 64 million claims. The pension fiasco has led to further distrust in a government already tainted by a series of scandals. The government has pledged to do all it can and set up 24-hour call centers to check records. *AP*

Strike paralyzes London

LONDON—Most of London's sprawling subway network was shut down by a strike on Tuesday, leaving hundreds of thousands of workers to walk, switch to trains or buses, or just stay home. Around 2,300 members of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers launched a 72-hour strike at 6 p.m. Monday in a dispute related to the collapse of their employer, maintenance consortium Metronet. There was no service on nine of the network's 12 lines, subway operator Transport for London said. *AP*

Binladin company denies links to Osama

NEW YORK—LAWYERS FOR the Saudi Binladin Group, responding to lawsuits filed over the 9/11 attacks, say the large engineering and construction company is not liable for the terrorist plot because it forced Osama bin Laden to surrender his stake in the company 14 years ago.

In court papers, the lawyers argued that the Saudi Binladin Group, founded in 1989, forced the terrorist mastermind out as a shareholder of the company and another family-owned company, the Mohammad Binladin Co., in June 1993.

The document was filed Friday evening in US District Court in Manhattan in response to claims in lawsuits brought by representatives, survivors and insurance carriers of the victims of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs claimed that the Saudi Binladin Group, along with numerous banks, charities and individuals worldwide, provided material support and assistance to al-Qaida prior to the attacks. The lawsuits seek billions of dollars in damages.

The court documents identified Bakr Binladin—Osama bin Laden's brother, the senior member of the bin Laden family and chair of Saudi Binladin Group—as one of al-Qaida's principal financiers.

A judge in July had ordered Saudi Binladin Group to provide additional information about where the money for Osama bin Laden's 2 percent stake in the company went.

The plaintiffs, in court papers filed in August, complained the order fell short. It required the company to produce records of changes in the assets of a 1993 trust created from the sale of Osama bin Laden's shares—but only if they document transfers to bin Laden.

"Trusts are a tool often abused by terrorist financiers due to their ability to hide true ownership of trust assets, conceal the identity of parties benefiting from the trust and otherwise mask financial details," the plaintiffs said.

In its Friday filing, lawyers for Saudi Binladin Group said Bakr Binladin publicly renounced Osama bin Laden in a statement released to the media in February 1994. Two months later, the Saudi government revoked Osama bin Laden's citizenship and froze his assets, the lawyers noted.

These actions, they said, occurred well before the United States first placed Osama bin Laden on its list of designated terrorist individuals and organizations on Aug. 20, 1998, the same year the leader of al-Qaida issued an edict that it was the duty of Muslims to attack US citizens.

Osama bin Laden has more than 50 siblings who share in the fortune amassed after Osama's father, Mohammed Binladin, built his construction empire, elevating his family to among the wealthiest in Saudi Arabia. The al-Qaida founder's financial worth has remained in dispute.

According to the court papers, Saudi Binladin Group was created as the surviving entity of Mohammed Binladin's construction company, which was formed in the 1930s. *AP*

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Taliban beat them for refusing to convert, say ex-hostages

SEOUL—SOME OF THE SOUTH Korean Christian aid workers held hostage by Afghanistan's Taliban said they were beaten for refusing to convert to Islam and protecting female captives, a hospital chief said on Monday.

"We found through medical checks that some male hostages were beaten," Cha Seung-Gyun told reporters after the 19 freed aid workers—14 women and five men—underwent examinations at a hospital outside Seoul.

They had returned home Sunday after six weeks in captivity.

"They said they were beaten at first for refusing to take part in Islamic prayers or for rejecting a demand to convert," Cha said.

The disclosure was likely to increase public sympathy for the ex-hostages, mostly in their 20s and 30s, following increasing criticism of what was seen as a reckless trip to a war-torn devoutly Islamic nation.

President Roh Moo-Hyun on Monday ordered that the former captives repay some of the costs of their rescue, which followed a deal between South Korean government negotiators in Afghanistan and the hardline Islamic insurgents.

The hospital chief said two male hostages, Je Chang-Hee and Song Byung-Woo, were beaten or threatened with death when they refused to move out of a dugout shelter and leave some of their female colleagues behind.

But Cha said medical checks on the women showed no signs of rape, and they did not report having been sexually assaulted.

The aid workers repeatedly apologized after arriving home early Sunday. They were taken to Sam Anyang General Hospital south of the capital for check-ups.

Cha said the men had fully recovered and no longer showed external signs of their beatings. He did not say how many of the hostages had been assaulted.

A pastor from the Saem-Mul Presbyterian church which organized the ill-fated mission said Sunday that some male hostages had been "severely beaten" for refusing to embrace Islam.

The pastor, Park Eun-Jo, also said some of the women had been "at risk of being sexually assaulted." Cha said six or seven female hostages showed symptoms of insomnia and depression, and expressed worries about their lives after being released from the hospital.

"Some patients require a close look and intensive care and treatment," he said, adding they are still suffering from shock after learning upon their release that two male hostages were murdered in July. *AFP*

KIM GI-NA (right) and Kim Kyung-Ja (left), who were among the 23 Koreans kidnapped and freed later by the Taliban in Afghanistan, speak at a news conference at the Sam Anyang Hospital in Anyang, southwest of Seoul on Sept. 4. AFP

Bush hints at US troop cuts in Iraq

AL-ASAD AIR BASE, IRAQ—President George W. Bush, on a surprise visit to Iraq on Monday, said a reduction in combat troops was possible but sniped at "nervous" US politicians ahead of a showdown with Congress.

Bush flew from Washington in total secrecy to this desert base in Anbar province, where the US administration has taken heart from the sight of former Sunni insurgents joining with US forces to fight al-Qaida extremists.

He convened a meeting of his "war council" with Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and other Iraqi leaders just days before US commander Gen. David Petraeus and US Ambassador Ryan Crocker report to Congress on the progress of Bush's military "surge" strategy.

Petraeus and Crocker believed that "if the kind of success we are now seeing (in Anbar) continues, it is possible to maintain the same level of security with fewer American forces," Bush said.

"I urge members of Congress to listen to what (Petraeus and Crocker) have to say," he said, standing in front of two military Humvees spotlit in the gathering night.

The White House is to make a formal report to the Democratic-led Congress by Sept. 15 aimed at persuading US lawmakers to continue funding the Iraq war, four and a half bloody years since the US-led invasion of 2003.

Aside from Bush himself, Maliki is coming under harsh criticism from many in Congress for his perceived political inaction to reconcile Iraq's warring factions.

Back aboard Air Force One en route to a summit of Asia-Pacific leaders in Australia, Bush expressed frustration with the slow pace of political change in Iraq but said he still backed Maliki's "evolving" leadership.

Bush's trip to Iraq coincided with the withdrawal of British troops from their last base in the southern city of Basra amid tensions between Washington and its top ally Britain over their policy in Iraq.

Staging a surprise detour from his trip to Sydney, Bush arrived at the Al-Asad air base in Anbar along with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and national security adviser Stephen Hadley. *AFP*

CITYLIGHTS GARDENS - TOWERS 3 & 4 GETS FINANCIAL BACKING OF DBP

The Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), the second largest government-owned bank in the Philippines, has put its financial muscle behind Syntech Properties Inc (Syntech) in support of Syntech's construction of Towers 3 and 4 of its Citylights Gardens Condominium project in Cebu City. At the project finance loan signing ceremony held today at the Marco Polo Plaza Hotel, the two parties inked a deal that confirms DBP's provision of a Peso 300 million term loan facility to partially finance the construction of the project. Syntech is part of the Woh Hup Group, a leading Singapore-based building and civil engineering contractor. Through Syntech, it has heavily invested in the development of the entire project which costs a total of over Peso 2,500 million. The management is now very pleased to note that a local government-backed bank is helping to promote such foreign investments in the country by actively participating in the project.

At the event, Syntech is represented by its Chairman, Mr Eugene Yong Kon Yoon, whereas Mr. Rosalier Dagondon, Senior Assistant Vice President and Head of SRMO-CP2, represented DBP in the signing of the loan agreement. Mr Ramonito Durano III, is also present to represent DBP's Board of Directors. The event is witnessed by senior officers from Syntech and DBP.

Syntech is already mid-way through the construction of Towers 3 & 4 of Citylights Gardens Condominium project. Tower 3 is being topped off on the same day and construction of Tower 4 is on schedule to follow by early next year. The two 20-storey towers will comprise the second and final phase of the entire project. Each tower offers 108 units of 2 and 3-bedroomed well-appointed apartments for the discerning few. Sizes of the units range from 108 to 140 square meters. With a choice location up on the Nivel Hills, every unit enjoys spectacular views of the surrounding city, sea and mountains. Residents of this exclusive condominium project will get to enjoy the first class amenities and recreational facilities which are already in place.

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THE HEAD of The Missionaries of Charity Sister Nirmala gestures as she speaks with AFP during an interview at Mother House, the global headquarters of the order in Calcutta. AFP

Mother Teresa's letters surprising, inspiring

CALCUTTA, INDIA—LETTERS written by Mother Teresa which reveal she sometimes doubted God surprised and then inspired many among her order, her successor said ahead of Wednesday's 10th anniversary of the ethnic Albanian nun's death.

"The sisters were surprised, I was surprised to learn how she suffered in her thirst for God," said Sister Nirmala, the diminutive superior general of the Missionaries of Charity.

"She suffered, yet she had a mask on herself of mysterious joy which comes only from complete surrender to God."

Sister Nirmala succeeded an ailing Mother Teresa six months before she died aged 87 on Sept. 5, 1997, and will help lead a special Mass to mark her passing.

The collection of letters written to colleagues and superiors over 66 years and complied by an advocate for her sainthood are due to be published on Tuesday under the title "Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light."

They cover a range of subjects dear to the Roman Catholic nun but it is those which portray her as at times deeply tormented about her faith that have grabbed attention.

In 1956, the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize winner, who dedicated her life to the poor, sick and dying in India, wrote: "Such deep longing for God—and … repulsed—empty—no faith—no love—no zeal." *Reuters*

Al Fayed blasts bishop's plea for Diana's peace

AL FAYED AP

LONDON—Mohamed Al Fayed has lashed out at a senior bishop's plea for the wrangling over Diana, princess of Wales' memory to cease, a newspaper reported on Sunday.

Al Fayed, the father of Diana's boyfriend Dodi Fayed, who was also killed by a tragic 1997 car crash in Paris, took a swipe at Richard Chartres, the bishop of London.

The Egyptian tycoon branded Chartres a "stuffed shirt" in an indication that next month's inquest—which Al Fayed is heavily involved in—will be a bitter affair, The Sunday Times reported.

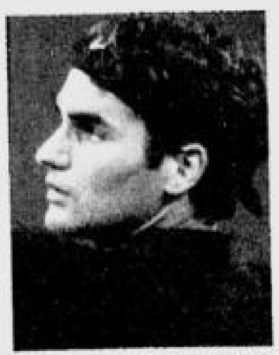
"Let it end here," Chartres urged the congregation at Friday's memorial service for Diana—to which Al Fayed was not invited—which marked 10 years since the fatal crash which took her life at the age of 36.

Her sons Princes William, now 25, and Harry, 22, both spoke, with the younger royal delivering a touching speech about his mother.

"Prince Harry had the grace to acknowledge the suffering of other families who lost someone that night," Al Fayed said in a statement.

"This stuffed shirt of a clergyman should take lessons from the 22-year-old prince in how to behave. He certainly shouldn't have hijacked a memorial service dedicated to Diana, princess of Wales, to let us know various of his personal opinions—for that's all they were. *AFP*

WHAT'S INSIDE
▪ **Roger** serves up another victory /A26



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'I want to beat Manny so badly I can taste it'

Barrera carries weight of fallen Mexican fighters

MANNY PACQUIAO HAS ALWAYS FOUGHT in behalf of his country—anyone who has heard his previous pre- and post-fight talk knows that much.

When he faces Mexican Marco Antonio Barrera on Oct. 6, though, he won't be the only one trying to summon nationalistic fervor.

Barrera, the Latino boxing idol headed for Hall-of-Fame enshrining, has turned the highly anticipated rematch into a patriotic battle.

"I am not just fighting for personal revenge, I'm fighting for my country and my fellow Mexican fighters who have fallen victim to Pacquiao," said Barrera after a workout, according to a report at eastsideboxing.com.

"I am training harder than I ever have. I want to beat Manny so badly I can taste it. This goes beyond being personal. For me, this fight is about restoring national pride."

And as if there isn't enough nationalistic flavor surrounding the match already, a report by the boxing website on the Barrera training in Guadalajara has declared the Filipino ring icon as "Republica Enemy No. 1."

"Pacquiao has blitzed through the best boxing fighters Mexico had to offer since 2003, including Morales (KO 3, TKO 10), Barrera (TKO 11), Oscar Larios (W 12), Emanuel Lucero (TKO 3), Hector Velazquez (TKO 6) and Jorge Solis (KO 8)," the report said.

BARRERA: This fight is beyond personal

"The only "blemish" was a draw against Juan Manuel Marquez in 2004, where Pacquiao sent Marquez to the canvas three times in the first round."

Pacquiao, for his part, continues to train at the Rex "Wakee" Salud gym in Cebu City, and has vowed not to allow Barrera exact revenge for his humiliating loss in Texas in November 2003.

The gym has been closed to the public after trainer Freddie Roach complained to gym owner Salud of unknown individuals secretly taking footage of Pacquiao.

Even the media have not been spared. They have been asked to secure an entry pass at Salud's office to be approved by Roach.

On Saturday, Pacquiao will hold a media and fans' day where he will grant the wish of some 43 pupils of the Fun and Learn Achievers' Learning Center to see him train.

Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

ONE of the NBA's most endearing stars, Kobe Bryant of the LA Lakers, waves to fans as he arrives at the NAIA last night. JESS YUSON

Lakers' Kobe planes in amid tight security

By Tarra Quismundo

AMERICAN BASKETBALL superstar Kobe Bryant flew into the country via a private jet last night amid protocols said to be more restrictive than those enforced during visits of heads of state, diplomats and other dignitaries.

Only a select group of photographers and television crew were allowed to cover the arrival of Bryant's party which arrived at past 6 p.m. at the ramp near the International Cargo Terminal of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Organizers of Bryant's Manila visit allowed handpicked photographers of selected major broadsheets, the INQUIRER included, to cover the National Basketball Association superstar's arrival for a one-day stop here as part of a promotional Asian tour for the sports brand Nike.

However, strictly no interviews were allowed.

Media coordinators withheld flight details but airport sources said Bryant arrived via a light jet, an 8- to 10-seater Gulf Stream, from Honolulu, Hawaii. The LA Lakers' star reportedly shared the plane with five other passengers.

Bryant's Manila stop is part of his Supernatural Asia Tour 2007, which launches a Nike basketball footwear named after him, organizers said.

He is expected to mingle with children from a Pampanga elementary school at The Fort at 2 p.m. and then "share his training regimen" with young Filipino basketball players at the PhilSports Arena in Pasig City later in the afternoon.

Bryant will then continue his tour in Taipei, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing.

The 6-foot-6 ace is coming off the Fiba Americas tournament, where he was part of the Team USA that bagged the gold medal.

Bryant is also expected to spearhead the American bid to regain lost glory in basketball, a sport where the US used to enjoy dominant status.

But losses in two World Championship tournaments and the 2004 Olympics have knocked the Americans off the throne, although Bryant and Co. are heavily favored again for Beijing 2008.

This is the second time Bryant will be flying to the Philippines, although he was still just a budding superstar during his first visit here.

Cone sees no problem signing Bono, Quiñahan

By Musong R. Castillo

ONLY THREE FIRST-ROUND PICKS REMAIN unsigned as of yesterday, and two of them belong to the Alaska Aces.

But don't take that as an indication of how the Aces coaching staff think of Ken Bono and JR Quiñahan.

"We actually treat them as picks higher than where we got them," coach coach Tim Cone told the INQUIRER yesterday. "I don't foresee any problems as far as negotiations (for their contracts) go.

"I'm sure that we (management) will give them what they expect."

A third first rounder, Yousif Aljamal, was drafted by Air21 and dealt to Talk 'N Text, but not having a contract at this point is understandable for the 6-foot-4 do-it-all.

Aljamal is still spearheading San Beda's title retention bid in the NCAA and coach Frankie Lim, who happens to be the Phone Pals' manager, said that Aljamal will be signed right after the NCAA.

Training camp starts today for Alaska, just one full day after coming back from a long vacation in California as part of the team's bonus for winning the Fiesta Cup over Talk 'N Text, and the Aces hope that the absence of contracts won't keep Bono and Quiñahan from hitting the gym with the team.

"I am not forcing them (Bono and Quiñahan) to attend practice," Cone added. "But I would be very happy if they show up for practice."

Team manager Joaqui Trillo is still in the United States to attend to some things, but Cone said that contract negotiations will start as soon as Trillo arrives tomorrow.

Alaska picked Bono, a former UAAP MVP out of Adamson, sixth in the Draft before plucking Quiñahan, a burly center, with the seventh overall choice.

Bono, in an earlier INQUIRER report, will be asking for a three-year deal worth just over P7 million, not bad considering that No. 1 pick Joe Devance will get P8.544 million over the same period from Welcoat.

"I consider them steals in the Draft," Cone added. "I was surprised that we got to them with such late picks."

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The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas invites all interested parties to bid for the following real estate properties:

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2		7 H&L	112 to 199 sq.m.	Res'l lots w/ 30 or 36 sq.m. imp.	P2700 to P3200/sq.m
	Mandaluyong City				
3	*Tuesday Manor Condominium*	12 units	46 to 52 sq.m.	Residential Condo units	P25T to P27T/ sq.m.
4		20 slots	12.5 sq.m.	Parking slot	P250,000/slot
	Muntinlupa City *Soldiers Hills Subdivision*				
5	L6 B18, Roman Cruz Jr. Avenue	20063	331	Com'l/Res'l w/ 400 sqm. imp	4,701,000
	Bataan				
6	*Cofel's Park Subdivision*	3 lots	86 to 136 sq.m.	Residential lots	P700 to P1700/sq.m
7		14 H&L	75 to 240 sq.m.	Res'l lots w/ 30 sq.m. imp	P700 to P1900/sq.m
	Batangas				
8	Brgy. Pinagbayanan, San Juan	T-134028	51,428	Agricultural Lot	3,003,000
	Mateo, Rizal				
9	*Tierra Monte, Phase 4*	13 lots	70 to 359 sq m.	Residential lots	P1,700 to P2200/sq.m.
10		2 H&L	139 to 142 sq.m.	Res'l lots w/ 25 or 32 sq.m. imp.	P2200 to P2900/sq.m.
	Trece Martires City *La Trinidad*				
11	Block 61 Lot 40, Phase 3	28704	3,232	Commercial lot	8,080,000
12	Block 76 Lot 30, Phase 3	28696	3,650	Commercial lot	9,125,000
13	Phase 1	232 H&L	49 to 166 sq.m.	Res'l lots w/ 25 sq.m. imp	P2000 to P3000/sq.m.
14	Phase 2	226 H&L	50 to 159 sq.m.	Res'l lots w/ 25 sq.m. imp	P1800 to P3500/sq.m.
15	Phase 3	293 H&L	50 to 118 sq.m.	Res'l lots w/ 25 or 30 sq.m. imp	P1600 to P3000/sq.m.
16	Phase 1	321 lots	50 to 196 sq.m.	Residential Lot	P1800 to P2700/sq.m.
17	Phase 2	234 lots	50 to 247 sq.m.	Residential Lot	P1800 to P2200/sq.m.
18	Phase 3	645 lots	49 to 260 sq.m.	Residential Lot	P1200 to P2800/sq.m.

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished bid forms enclosed in sealed envelopes shall be on 19 September 2007, 10:00 A.M. at Rm. 313, Five-Storey Bldg., BSP Complex, A. Mabini St., Malate, Manila. All bids will be opened immediately after the deadline for submission of bids at 5th Flr., Executive Business Center, Five-Storey Bldg., BSP Complex.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Buyer is deemed to have inspected the property, determined its condition and verified the title thereof.
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3. The BSP reserves the right to withdraw any or all of the properties offered for sale at any time and to reject any or all bids or to waive any infirmity found therein, or to accept such offers as will be considered advantageous to the BSP.
4. Prices are subject to change without prior notice.
5. The Committee will immediately start accepting offers for negotiation, in the event of a failed bidding, and will continue to accept offers through the Asset Management Department. However, the Committee may at its discretion, elect to conclude the negotiation immediately after failure of bidding whenever there is a highest complying offeror ascertained.
6. Offerors at the Public Bidding must tender a BID BOND equivalent to 10% of the offered price and offerors under the negotiated sale basis must submit an EARNEST MONEY equivalent to 10% of the negotiated price either in CASH or CASHIER's/MANAGER's CHECK payable to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas which shall form part of the consideration once the offer is approved.
7. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions under existing guidelines.

Complete description of the properties, rules and regulations on the bidding procedures and the prescribed bid forms are available for a minimal fee of P50.00 at the Asset Management Department, Rm. 313, Five-Storey Bldg. through the following:

	Direct Line	Trunk line: 524-70-11
Ma. Geraldine Tarlengco / Juliet Villanueva Joan Rosales	523-34-86	loc. 2857
Al Mendoza / Nalda Santos Maricris Rodriguez	523-34-20	2381

(Sgd.) **MELPIN A. GONZAGA**
Committee Chairman

(PDI–Sept. 5, 2007)

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SEAG squad 'won't miss Pagulayan'

PAGULAYAN

By Musong R. Castillo

THINGS WILL CONTINUE TO LOOK BRIGHT for the Philippine billiards team in the coming Southeast Asian Games—never mind if the squad will miss one of its most colorful and talented mainstays.

Alex Pagulayan, the former world 9-ball champion and anchor of the RP team that won a mind-boggling eight gold medals in the 2005 Manila SEAG, has opted out this year because of differences with the governing Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines.

"We've never gone into the habit of predicting the number of golds, but definitely, it is in the pool events where we have a big chance," said BSCP chair Ernie Fajardo, who guested yesterday in the weekly PSA Forum at Shakey's UN Avenue.

Fajardo, who was joined in the Forum by BSCP chair Yen Makabenta, confirmed that Pagulayan will skip the SEAG but will play for the country in the 2007 World Pool Championship later this year.

Pagulayan's absence, Fajardo said, is not enough to diminish the potential gold haul for the country in December.

Pagulayan, who had a spat with the BSCP after he was pulled out of a leg of the Guinness 9-Ball Tour, won three of those SEAG gold medals two years ago, and would definitely be a force for the country in the Thailand Games.

He won the 8-ball singles gold medal, was half of the 9-ball doubles champion and a member of the triumphant snooker team.

His absence will leave the country's chances squarely on the shoulders of Asian Games 9-Ball gold medal winner Antonio Gabica and potential world superstar Jeffrey De Luna.

Already assured of slots in the snooker team are Benjie Guevarra, Reynaldo Grandea, Francisco dela Cruz, Al Ortega, Joven Alba and former Asian champion Marlon Manalo.

"Marlon expressed interest to play," said Fajardo in the forum backed by Shakey's and Pagcor.

PSC getting ₱50 million extra cash from Pagcor

By June Navarro

RAMIREZ

THE CASH-strapped Philippine Sports Commission will get additional funding with the implementation of Executive Order 651, a presidential directive tasked to strengthen the grassroots program of the sports government agency.

PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez said that the P50-million budget earmarked under EO 651 would directly go to the PSC, alleviating its funding woes.

According to Ramirez, President Macapagal-Arroyo has already instructed the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) to set aside P50 million starting October.

The cash is expected to ease the pressure on the PSC which was allotted a measly P28-million budget for 2007 from the General Appropriations Act. The funding from the GAA is normally used for the operations of the agency.

The presidential directive will focus on tapping talents in chess, boxing, taekwondo, billiards and wushu but the PSC chief stressed that other disciplines would also be considered, particularly Olympic events.

Ramirez said the discovery of young athletes on the grassroots level would be the main agenda of EO 651, which could complement the Philippine Olympic Festival (POF), a talent identification scheme of the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC).

With the agency's Philippine Sports Institute as lead organization, Ramirez said the PSC would dispatch emissaries to the provinces in the entire archipelago, especially in areas left untouched by the national sports associations (NSAs).

The potential discoveries would be sent to school and stay in a training camp supervised by the PSC, Ramirez said.

In-form Cards hope to ride NC momentum

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT?

Mapua, the team that looked as if it would go down for the count, is up in the Final Four. Yes, the Final Four. And even coach Leo Isaac was surprised.

"I must admit that I wasn't expecting to make it to the Final Four right away, considering that we only started our preparations mid February," he said.

Isaac said he came on board for a three-year program with wingmen Neil Pascual, Sean Co and Kelvin dela Peña as the key holdovers. He inherited a team lacking in height but rich in experience.

"I was the only one new in the team," said Isaac, who powered the Cardinals to the 1981 championship and was rewarded the MVP plum for it.

The Cardinals, who in the pre-season replaced Horacio Lim with Isaac at the helm, also didn't get the best start of the season losing three straight before hacking out their first win, an 86-80 decision over Jose Rizal, last July 6.

At 2-6 though at the height of the second round, Mapua pulled a coup of sorts by downing Letran (89-82) last Aug. 8. That upset win triggered the season's hottest finish—a four-game swirl that propelled them to the next round.

It was the second straight Final Four appearance for the Cardinals, who last won the championship via a back-to-back in 1990 and 1991 when the likes of Benny Cheng and Randy Alcantara formed the backbone of the squad.

But amid the streak, the boosted morale and the soaring confidence comes this reality check: Mapua will take on overwhelming favorite San Beda in the Final Four with the Red Lions even enjoying the twice-to-beat incentive.

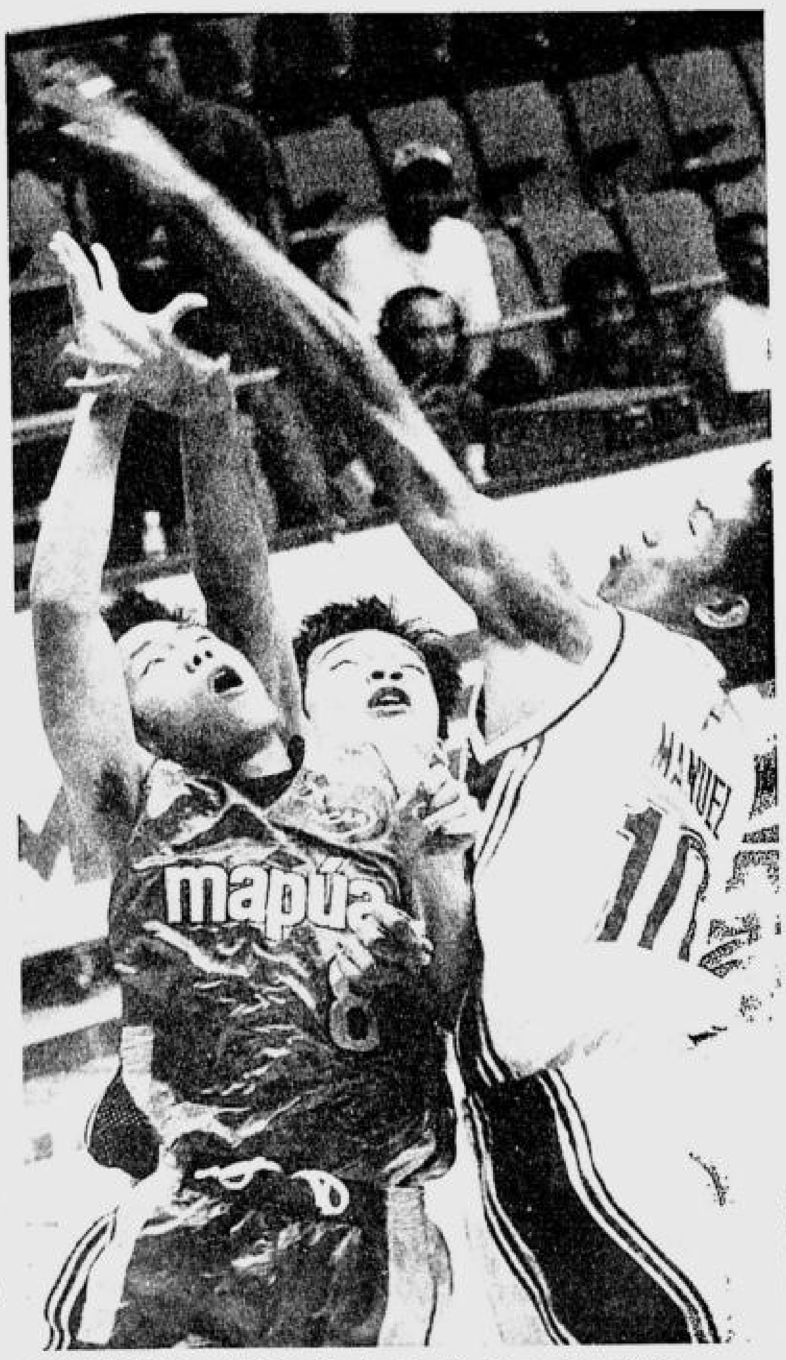
"We will just give it our best," said Isaac.

It will take the best that the Cardinals can give to forge an upset. Because the Lions have proven to be a tough not to crack for Mapua.

San Beda won both teams' meetings in the elimination round, beating Mapua, 89-75, last July 27 and 87-77 last July 4 with Sam Ekwe frozen by a one-game suspension.

And it looks like the Cardinals will try to ride momentum in hopes of pulling off an upset.

"The boys' morale is high because of our four-game winning run at the end of the eliminations," said Isaac.



AUGUST DELA CRUZ

JONATHAN Banal (left) typifies the Cardinals' spunk late in the eliminations. A win over the Letran Knights touched off Mapua's romp.

New PBL team eyes standout collegiate trio

By Jasmine W. Payo

BORBORAN

A YOUTHFUL TEAM whipped into form by a young coach.

This is the kind of squad Pharex Health Corp. envisions to form in its debut in the Philippine Basketball League (PBL) next season.

Carlo Tan, a 31-year-old former coach of Xavier high school, was tapped to mentor Pharex just days after the league unanimously approved its entry.

"All teams, except us, have experience," said Tan during yesterday's PSA Forum at Shakey's UN Avenue. "We're not thinking of winning right away, we're thinking of building a team. Gradual improvement is important for us."

Tan said Mark Borboran of University of the East, Mac Baracael of Far Eastern University and Jonathan Fernandez of National University are among the players in his wish list.

"I like the game of Borboran; I love the way he can mix it up inside and outside," said Tan during the public sports program sponsored by Pagcor and Shakey's UN Avenue.

"Baracael, he's showing a lot of promise. He's a big, strong and athletic guy. Fernandez, the guy can shoot."

Pharex plans to complete its lineup after the PBL dispersal and rookie drafts set in two weeks. The new season will unfold in October.

"We have to make sure we also secure a good center who can play both offensively and defensively," said Tan, who played high school basketball in Canada.

"We're really trying to form a quality, competitive team," added team manager Jean Alabanza, a former Ateneo Blue Eagles stalwart.

Team officials said that Pharex, a subsidiary of pharmaceutical firm Pascual Laboratories, has a five-year basketball program.

"If we get good picks, probably in our second year [we can be very competitive]," said Pascual Laboratories division manager Ding Camua. "But if we have luck in this year's draft, we can be a contender."

Pharex joins three-time conference champion Harbour Centre, Toyota Balintawak, Magnolia of San Miguel Corp., Wel-Best and Hapee Toothpaste as the league's regular members.

LA cops called into Pacquiao apartment

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—IF YOU HAVE SOMEthing bad to say, please go away.

The order of the day: Keep quiet.

We all have a role to keep Manny Pacquiao perfectly focused.

You see, there's barely a month left before Pacquiao's rematch with Marco Antonio Barrera, who yesterday officially declared war, on the second month of training, from his secluded high-altitude camp in Guadalajara.

"I want to beat Pacquiao so badly I can taste it," Barrera told a Mexican boxing website.

Barrera, swearing he's out to restore national pride, also singled out Pacquiao as Mexico's Public Enemy No. 1. *(See banner story on A23)*

* * *

Nothing very new there, actually.

OK, the house is not burning, and this info could normally wait.

Sorry, but the news is distressing enough it must be immediately relayed.

Two Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) cops were called into Pacquiao's gated Pallazzo apartment here Sunday afternoon.

There was no visible trouble.

But the presence of the police confirmed that peace, or whatever little remained of it, has been shattered in Pacquiao's favorite nest, where he settles for the hard part of training.

No need anymore to tell those in charge that the place must be in similarly splendid shape as its owner, who'll be needing it for the final push in preparation for his Oct. 6 fight in Las Vegas.

* * *

Actually, there had been clear signs of trouble brewing, and this came in the open when Rodel Mayol moved out of the place, where he's supposed to be repackaged under Pacquiao's care, over the weekend.

Mayol obviously could not stand the stifling situation and opted for peace and privacy somewhere.

We next received a text message from physical therapist Jeff de Guzman, who often lends a hand to Team Pacquiao.

"Greg has been blacklisted at Pallazzo, which was also declared off limits to the troupe," Jeff bared.

Greg is Greg Asuncion, a trusted Pacquiao aide who works with the LA Sheriff's Office.

* * *

What happened at Pallazzo, why were you prevented from entering?

"I was up on my way there when I saw two LA cops in the apartment," Asuncion told the INQUIRER.

"Who called them in?"

"Winchell Campos."

"Isn't he the one causing tension and trouble inside there? Why did Manny allow him to stay?"

"Well, he's really wise. He had the apartment registered under Manny and himself, because he was the one who looked for the place."

* * *

Asuncion, also called Sheriff by Filipino associates, bared that two team mainstays, trainer Nonoy Neri and assistant Alex Ureto, had already packed up and were also on their way out.

Boxer Bernie Torres, with whom Campos reportedly had a flaring confrontation, had left ahead.

From what Asuncion narrated, he had to show the cops his key to the apartment and explain that he's trusted by Pacquiao to either visit or stay there.

"Maybe Winchell Campos wanted all of us driven out, because we have been exposing his misdeeds, he's really a pest. Please tell that and quote me. He's no good. He has pending cases here and he's a discredit to Team Pacquiao."

"But how do things stand at Pallazzo now?"

"Nonoy Neri and Alex were prevailed upon by Buboy Fernandez, who called from Cebu, to stay put. As for the LA cops, they said I could use the apartment anytime I wished."

"What about Winchell Campos?"

"They are keeping watch over him. He has pending cases but there's no formal complaint yet. With one violation, they promised to arrest him."

* * *

That's about it for now.

Powerful as Manny Pacquiao is, it's obvious he could not run his special nest here by remote control.

As for Campos, we had tried not to identify him as the pest hated by other occupants of the Pacquiao apartment in a previous column.

Of course, he had told people he wanted to see me immediately.

This was the reason I waited for him before the long Labor Day break here at Wild Card, where he had also been training.

I will be there again to get his side today.

Here's hoping he shows up to explain why LA cops had had to visit Pacquiao's special nest here.

Hot Del Rosario, Zuave riders making waves

LEG TITLE: Robbie David of Team Zuave celebrates with a victory kick after topping the Novice 4-Strokes class in second leg of the 2007 Petron-JSAP National Jet Ski Series in Subic.

SUBIC—REIGNING CHAMPION PAUL DEL ROSARIO put away two titles while Team Zuave riders Robbie David and Butch Casido posted big upsets in their respective divisions in the second leg of the 2007 Petron-JSAP National Jet Ski Series at the Waterfront Beach here recently.

Del Rosario bested Peter Cruz, chief mechanic Yanik Elnar and Canadian expatriate Brian Poturnak for the Stand-up crown and later stamped his class over BJ Ang and Mike Mangio for the premiere Expert Runabout 1200 Unlimited plum.

David displayed aggressive moves in turning back first-leg winner Sammy Boy Parilla to sweep the Novice 4-Strokes class.

Casido likewise showed grit and determination to upstage first leg winner Alex Isip in the Novice 2-strokes division.

Romeo Macapinlac Jr. made it a 1-2 finish for Team Zuave as engine problems bogged down Isip, who was forced to take a pit stop after being unintentionally hit by Casido as he slowed down.

David and Parilla had a close fight right from the start but the former took a big dive to wrest the lead for good as Parilla, stunned by a big splash of water, accidentally unplugged the lanyard.

Parilla settled for runner-up honors, followed by lady rider Abby Reyes and Jhun Simbulan.

Other winners in the series organized by the Jet Sports Association of the Philippines were Bobby Del Rosario, Jam Mangio and Yanik Elnar.

Del Rosario captured the Executive class crown, beating Joey Millionado, Mangio copped her second consecutive sweep in the Women's Runabout division while Elnar bagged the Open Sport title.

SPORTSWATCH

Chua: ABC-5 remains PBA's official coverer

THE PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION won't be switching networks—at least for the 2007-08 Season.

PBA chairman Tony Chua said yesterday the next season will still be aired over ABC-5, the league's coverer the past two years.

Chua made the announcement following a meeting with Bobby Barreiro, ABC-5's managing director, Monday night.

"We had a good talk," said Chua, who sits as Red Bull governor in the PBA board. "I assured Bobby that the PBA will honor the contract we have with ABC-5."

The PBA will open its 33rd season on Oct. 14 with the Barangay Ginebra Kings defending the Philippine Cup.

Generals repulse Dragons

REIGNING TITLIST EMILIO AGUINALDO College thwarted Universal College of Nursing's fiery rally to prevail, 77-73, and notch its fourth straight win yesterday in the 6th Universities and Colleges Athletic Association (UCAA) men's basketball tournament at the Aguilar Sports Complex in Las Piñas.

The Generals banked on the heroics of Gester Ebuen whose drive and freethrow in the final 24.2 seconds gave EAC a 76-71 spread.

The heroics of Ebuen, who finished with just nine points, came after Dragons hotshot Mac Montilla put UCN within 73-71, 1:41 to go.

In the other game, Nikko Pupos banged in 29 points to power the Asian College of Science and Technology Lightnings past the Olivarez College Sea Lions, 93-84.

Long distance triathlon up

THE WHITE ROCK TRIATHLON WILL once again be hosted by White Rock Beach Resort in Subic, Zambales, on Oct. 6.

The country's premiere endurance race will cover 2km of ocean swim at White Rock Beach resort, a 90km cycling ride through Zambales and a 21km run to Olongapo and SBMA.

Athletes from all over the country as well as foreigners from Singapore and the United States have signed up to participate.

Registration is open with deadline set on Sept. 15. For details, visit www.extribe.com.ph, or contact Extribe Inc. at (632)4389021.

Executive Chess Saturday

THE FIRST NCFP EXECUTIVES AND PROfessionals Chess Challenge will unfold on Sept. 8 at the Greenhouse Grill, 31 Matalino St., Diliman, Quezon City.

The tournament will be played over 7 rounds Swiss system, 25 minutes active-style. At stake are home appliances, medals, trophies and seven slots to the Grand Finals which will be held in December.

For details, contact GM Eugene Torre (09228822870), Dr. Jenny Mayor (09194782209), Julius Fortuna (09209181471) or lawyer Samuel Estimo (09159360354).

PCAP series starts today

QUALITY MATCHES RESUME AT MAKATI Coliseum as the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-stag derby series starts today.

At the end of the six-leg series, the participant with the most number of points will win the 2007 PCAP Stagfighter of the Year plum, according to promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co of WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp.

Up next at Makati Coliseum is the Sitio Maumel 5-stag derby on Saturday with 2003 Bakbakan champion Rainier Kau as host.

SJC hosts Showdown finals

WITH MORE THAN 150 FIGHTS LINED UP, the championship round of Pitgames Showdown 6-stag derby starts at 9 a.m. today at San Juan Coliseum.

Hosted by Danny Ty and Manny Berbano, the annual event has lured 178 entries. Winners will receive P1.5 million.

Among the pacesetters, with three wins each, are Kabu Taniguchi (two entries), Buddy Robregado, Perry Marquez, Ayong Lorenzo, Mario Garcia, Alfe Soriano, GBAP Vice Gov. Osmund Lambino, Pablo Hufano, Mayor Buddy Dunca, Wilson Ong and Mayor Jesry Palmares.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)—Infinite Passion (4), Miracle Music (3), Kapit Bahay/Awesome Buddy (2)

Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Empire Lady (6), Gold Collar (5), Kawiliwili (2), Kalashnikov (7)

Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Doomstead (7), Aramis (9), Touchmenot (11), Showgirl (5), Super Elegant (1)

Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Wild Orphan (5), Happy Again (9), Blue Iris (1), Iron King (7), Fair Urduja (3)

Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Cara Dura/Kim Possible (4), Kai Jason (8), Hok Kee Hok (6), Real Black (7)

Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Yao Man (5), Red Hot Water (1), Cool Cielo (8), Silent Operator (3), Seniority (4)

Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Dacing Slew (7), Quasimodo (3), Misa Malabon (1), Panibugho (5), Tribeca (9)

Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Iforanal (4), Dow Jones/Fiery Bull (5), Lord Elgene (8), War Bird (2), Reporter (7), Baling Ganda (3)

Aunzo, Ababa breathe down leader's neck

JONEL Ababa: In hot pursuit.
JESS YUSON

By Musong R. Castillo

SILANG, CAVITE—MARK FERNANDO held sway despite a hard-earned two-over-par 73 at The Riviera's tough Langer course here to keep a two-shot lead heading into the final three rounds of the marathon NGAP Qualifiers.

Ferdinand Aunzo and Jonel Ababa made their move while practically the entire 15-man field struggled, shooting identical 69s to shake the leaderboard and move within striking distance of Fernando.

Fernando, the leader since the third round over at the adjacent Couples layout, dropped two shots in the last five holes to see his imposing six-shot lead at the start of the day dwindle to two over Aunzo with a 90-hole 358 total.

The 27-year-old Aunzo birdied two of his first six holes before settling for a level 36 coming home, signing for a card that matched Ababa's day-best churned out in the flight ahead.

Ababa, the winner of the first National Caddies' Open, zoomed to third in the standings with a 361 aggregate after rebounding mightily from a fourth-round 78 on Friday last week.

The 23-year-old Ababa, an ex-caddy from Apo Golf in Davao, made the turn at an even 35 before mixing three birdies against a bogey in his next six holes to move into contention.

"Many things could still happen, I just need to grind it out everyday here," Mark Fernando, the spearhead of the Calatagan Golf program who shot a pair of 71s to close out the first phase, told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

Anthony Fernando opened up with three straight bogeys on the way to a 72 and dropped from a second place tie to fourth, five behind his pace-setting cousin.

Hotshot Jay Bayron turned in the day's last sub-par card—a 70—that moved him up a spot to fifth overall, his 365 total now one ahead of Asian Games bronze medalist Michael Bibat, who also had a 73.

The burly, 23-year-old Bibat lost his grip on fifth spot after a double bogey-7 on No. 15, where he took all of five shots to hit the green after spraying his drive into the left rough and then hitting a tree while trying to play out.

With still 54 holes to go, the seventh placer, Gene Bondoc, is now six shots off the sixth and final slot after shooting a 75 for 372.

The top six placers will be named to the Philippine squad that will play in the Nomura and Putra Cups as well as the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand in December.

Super GMs joining Asian chessfest

By Roy Luarca

POWERHOUSE CHINA HEADS THE foreign contingent coming over for the Asian Individual Chess Championship slated at the Cebu International Convention Center from Sept. 18 to 30.

The Chinese, second placers in the 2006 Turin Chess Olympiad, will be spearheaded by super Grandmasters Wang Yue (Elo 2696), Bu Xiangzhi (2685), Ni Hua (2681), Zhang Pengxiang (2649), Ye Jiangchuan (2632) and Wang Hao (2626).

Among the other early entries are GMs Ehsan Ghaem Maghami and Elshan Moradiabadi of Iran, and GMs Krishnan Sasikiran, P. Harikrishna and Surya Shekhar Ganguly of India.

SO

WANG

Indonesia is sending GMs Utut Adianto (2583) and Megaranto Susanto (2554) while Vietnam is also expected to field its top players in the event staking a total prize of $40,000 (about P1.8 million).

All five Filipino GMs—Eugene Torre, Joey Antonio, Mark Paragua, Nelson Mariano II and Bong Villamayor—are likely to take part in the event organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

Attention, however, will be focused on 13-year-old International Master Wesley So, the country's fourth-ranked player who is aiming for his second GM result.

So was unable to compete in the recent Malaysian Chess Open after contracting chicken pox, missing his chances to follow up on his first GM result obtained in Germany in 2006.

Also expected to contend are IMs Oliver Dimakiling, Jayson Gonzales, Ronald Bancod and Barlo Nadera, the best Filipino finisher in the Kuala Lumpur meet won by rising Chinese star Li Chao.

According to NCFP president Prospero Pichay, more than 150 top players from all over Asia and Pacific islands, including Australia and New Zealand, have signified their intention to join the event sanctioned by the World Chess Federation (Fide).

For details, call NCFP secretary general Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino or NCFP director Willie Abalos at 5368507.

Orduna pips Macau bet, leads chase for Asian karting crown

YOUNG KARTING ACE JOEY ORduna captured the Mini-ROK crown recently in the third leg of the 2007 Asian Karting Open Championship at the Sentul International Circuit in Bogor, Indonesia.

Racing for the first time in Indonesia, the 12-year-old Orduna finished second in all three qualifying heats and ruled the pre-final race, clocking 10 minutes and 22.465 seconds. Orduna edged Macau bet Chang Wing Chung by just 0.281 seconds.

The win was enough to install the sixth grade student of Maria Montessori School as overall leader in the race for the Asian Karting Mini-ROK crown this year.

Orduna's Tuason Racing-Ready2Race teammate Juha Turalba also bagged the Formula 125 juniors class runner-up honors and the junior ROK third place trophy.

Chang proved to be Orduna's biggest headache as he quickly grabbed the holeshot at the start of the final race.

Orduna, also the country's top bet in the World ROK Championship in Lonato, Italy next month, stuck close, dicing with Chang throughout the race as they broke away from the pack.

Posting his fastest laptime of 56.126 seconds on the sixth lap, Orduna maintained his pace until he took an aggressive dive in the second to the last turn of the final lap to wrest the lead.

He eventually claimed the checkered flag with a total time of 14 minutes and 6.248 seconds, just 0.1967 seconds ahead of Chang.

Hong Kong bet Chan Cheuk Hin copped third place while Singaporean Liam Gout and Indonesian Andhika Sasabone wound up fourth and fifth, respectively.

Orduna and Turalba are headed for Cebu on Sept. 7-9 for the sixth leg of the National Karting Super Series at the Kart Zone in Mabolo, Cebu City.

26 AGU
TONY KART
A JUBILANT Joey Orduna of Tuason Racing-R2R raises the trophy he won for clinching the Mini-ROK crown in the third leg of the 2007 Asian Karting Open Championship recently at the Sentul International Circuit in Bogor, Indonesia.

Orduna will try to preserve his wide lead in the mini-ROK class while Turalba aims to move up to third place overall in the junior division.

Lady booters join Asean tilt

By Marc Anthony Reyes

"KICK-ASS ATTITUDE."

If for anything, that's what the RP women's football team will be carrying when it competes in 2nd Asean championships starting Friday in Yangon, Myanmar.

The youthful and highly spirited squad is bracketed in tough Group A with defending champion Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia. Group B consists of Thailand, Singapore, Myanmar and Laos.

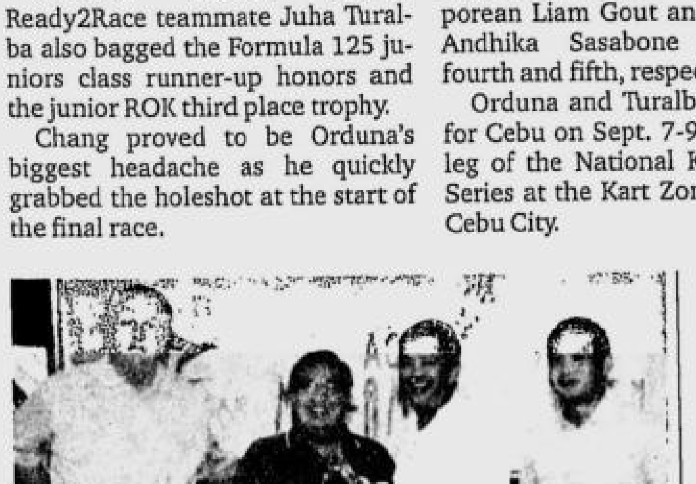
"In practice we tell our players to smile at their foes with the thought 'we're gonna kick your butt,'" said RP team manager Ernie Nierras of his charges during yesterday's PSA forum at the Shakey's UN Avenue branch.

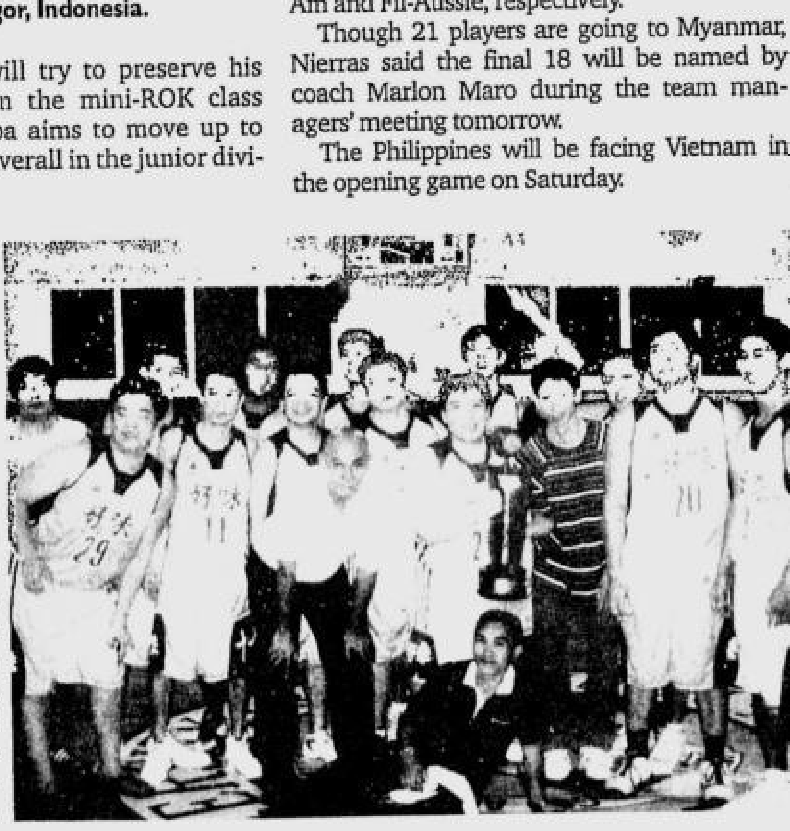
Nierras said the team has an average age of 18 and 10 lady booters are holdovers from the squad that saw action in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Reinforcing the team are Filipino-Americans and 2005 SEAG veterans Angelie Empelido and Mallory Dayot and rookies Sharon Whelchel and Nenita Dollente-Burgess, a Fil-Am and Fil-Aussie, respectively.

Though 21 players are going to Myanmar, Nierras said the final 18 will be named by coach Marlon Maro during the team managers' meeting tomorrow.

The Philippines will be facing Vietnam in the opening game on Saturday.


MID AMATEUR CHAMP: Benjie Sarmiento (third from left) receives his trophy from Active Group Inc. chair Antonio Turalba Sr. after ruling the Open division of the recent Mid Amateur Open at Malarayat Golf and Country Club in Lipa City. With Sarmiento and Turalba are MGCC golf director Mike Carr and Pacsports' RJ Maclang. Sarmiento won with a 151 total, one shot ahead of Mari Hechanova, Third was Boyet Zaragosa


GRAND CHAMP: Hobe Bihon team beats all past champions to win the Amateur Basketball Association (ABA) Tournament organized by Chris Cimanes. The country's top Chinese commercial team is led by team owner Bobby Co and James Cafe. From left are Walley Li, Albert Labordo, Mav Chua, Paul Boo, Brian Ngo, Aries Tuble, Jerry Tan (team manager), Clark Torrente (MVP), coach Jerry Ong, Mike Lao, Adrian Wong, Rodolfo Go, Bernard Uy, and Terry So.

SPORTS
US OPEN

ROGER Federer cranks up a serve against Feliciano Lopez. At one point in their US Open matchup, Federer won 35 straight points on his serve en route to advancing. AP

Roger serves up another victory

Federer waxes hot on service, forges quarterfinal duel vs Roddick

ANDY Roddick needs to scale a mountain so high to advance to the next round. The American is 1-13 (win-loss) against his next opponent, world No. 1 Roger Federer. AP

NEW YORK—ASKED IF HE REALIZED Roger Federer had won 35 straight points—yes, 35—on his serve, Feliciano Lopez blinked his green eyes.

"On his serve?" he repeated.

Maybe he was clarifying the stat, maybe he was in disbelief. No matter Monday night. Federer was off to play Andy Roddick in the quarterfinals at the US Open.

The streak came out of nowhere. The match was tied going into the third set, and Federer was down 0-40. Then, over a span of nine games, he won every point he served.

Think about it: All it would have taken was one strong return by Lopez. One slightly off shot by Federer. One double-fault.

Nothing. Not until was too late, right as Federer closed out the final game.

Told the remarkable number, Federer was curious—and impressed.

"What are you talking about?" he said. "That's awesome."

"Oh, come on. What have I done?" he said, playfully. "I should have broken him to win 6-3 so I wouldn't have to serve it out."

Federer wound up winning, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-4, in the fourth round, rallying after the Spanish left-hander caused him some early trouble.

"I was under a lot of pressure tonight," Federer said.

Hard to tell, especially when he got rolling. Trying for his fourth straight US Open title, the No. 1-ranked Federer faces No. 5 Andy Roddick.

Federer has done pretty well against the 2003 champion and the runner-up last year. To the tune of 13-1, including nine straight wins.

"It's a great record, but it doesn't help me," Federer said. "We'll see how it goes. Andy's always tough at the US Open."

Roddick is the only American left, marking the first US Open since 1998 without at least two in the quarterfinals.

James Blake had a chance to join in, but missed on three match points and lost to No. 10 Tommy Haas, 4-6, 6-4, 3-6, 6-0, 7-6 (4).

Earlier in the tournament, Blake ended his 0-for-9 slump in five-set tries. His rooting section, the rowdy J-Block, did its best to cheer him on, but the sixth-seeded Blake couldn't come up with that last, winning shot.

"It's going to sting for a little while," he said. "Just another unfortunate learning experience."

Haas will play No. 4 Nikolay Davydenko in the quarters. He eliminated Lee Hyung-taik, 6-1, 6-3, 6-4.

Earlier, Roddick was leading, 7-6 (6), 2-0, when his fourth-round opponent, No. 9 Tomas Berdych, stopped playing because he had trouble breathing and felt sluggish.

"I haven't been tested much this tournament, so far," said Roddick, who immediately went to the practice court to hit for nearly an hour.

Almost from the get-go, Roddick knew Berdych was ailing.

"I heard him say something to the umpire early on in the first," Roddick said. "Then, of course, I'm trying to eavesdrop on his whole conversation he's having with the trainer."

Said Berdych: "It wasn't any, like, straight one problem or one pain or something. Just like, generally didn't feel well."

On the women's side, former champ Svetlana Kuznetsova beat Victoria Azarenka, 6-2, 6-3, and moved on to play Agnes Szavay. The 18-year-old player from Hungary defeated Julia Vakulenko, 6-4, 7-6 (1).

Also, No. 18 Shahar Peer beat No. 30 Agnieszka Radwanska, 6-4, 6-1, and No. 6 Anna Chakvetadze stopped Tamira Paszek, 6-1, 7-5.

On Tuesday night, top-seeded Justine Henin plays No. 8 Serena Williams in the most attractive match of the day.

Also in action are No. 2 Rafael Nadal and No. 3 Novak Djokovic.

Concerned that the two women's quarterfinals set for Wednesday—Kuznetsova vs Szavay and Chakvetadze vs Peer—weren't dazzling enough, US Open officials changed the schedule.

The match between six-time major champion Venus Williams and No. 3 Jelena Jankovic was shifted from Tuesday to Wednesday night, with both players' approval. *AP*

US ready to rock hoop world in Beijing Olympics

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—Argentina seeks to defend its gold medal and the US will be looking to make amends for missed opportunities when they compete in the Beijing Olympics basketball tournament next August.

The two international powerhouses became the first from the Americas zone to qualify for the China Olympics, doing so at the Fiba Americas Olympic qualifying tournament which wrapped up Sunday at the Thomas and Mack Center.

The 2007 US national team has too many role players to be mistaken for the Dream Team of the 1990s, but unlike its most recent predecessors this American squad seems to have figured out how to succeed at the international game.

"This Team USA is one of the best I have ever seen," Argentina head coach Sergio Hernandez said. "Nobody will ever forget the first Dream Team with Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson, but I like this USA team very much with Kobe Bryant and LeBron James. They really know how to play together."

The US is the early pick to win the gold in Beijing, but have underachieved in recent major international competitions.

The USA has not been able to translate its favored tag into gold medals in the last three major international competitions, finishing sixth in the 2002 Worlds Championships and third in the 2004 Olympics and 2006 Worlds.

The US would earned an automatic berth to Beijing with a gold medal at the Worlds in Japan this summer, but a loss to Greece in the semifinals doomed that bid. *AFP*

Nowitzki, Parker lead squads past foes

MADRID, SPAIN—DIRK NOWITZKI scored 35 points and pulled down 11 rebounds as Germany needed overtime to beat the Czech Republic, 83-78, Monday on the opening day of the European Championship.

In Alicante, where Tony Parker scored 16 as France held off Poland, 74-66, a last-second three-pointer by Jaka Lakovic lifted Slovenia over Olympic runner-up Italy, 69-68, in Group D.

Defending champion Greece opened with a 76-66 win over Israel in a Group A match in Granada, where Andrei Kirilenko's 24 points and 12 rebounds led Russia over Serbia, 73-65.

NBA All-star forward Pau Gasol scored 19 as Spain routed Portugal, 82-56, in Sevilla to begin its campaign to become the third country to claim the European trophy while holding the world title. And Latvia surprised Croatia, 85-77, in the other Group B match.

In Group C, three-time champion Lithuania rolled over Turkey, 85-69.

At Palma de Mallorca, Nowitzki scored 19 second-half points and four more in overtime as Germany rallied from an early deficit in their Group C game.

"This was a lot tougher than we thought it would be. But it was good that we held together," the Dallas Mavericks veteran said.

The Czechs led 31-25 at halftime thanks to 10 points from to forward Lubos Barton.

But the Germans rallied in the second half behind Nowitzki, who hit a three-pointer to spark a 10-1 run that put Germany ahead 46-44 in the fourth quarter.

He connected on a turnaround jumper from the top of the key to put the Germans ahead 72-68 with 51 seconds remaining in regulation.

The Czechs closed to within 73-72 with 20 seconds to go before Ladislav Sokolovsky sank both free throws to tie the game before Mithat Demirel's last-second desperation shot missed.

Nowitzki's second field goal in overtime put Germany ahead by three with 49 seconds to go. Jakob Houska dunked after a Barton miss to pull the Czechs within one with 29 seconds left, but a pair of Demirel free throws and a dunk by Demond Greene decided the game as the Czechs didn't get another shot until three seconds were left.

At the Centro de Tecnificacion, the lead changed four times in the last 30 seconds with Lakovic hitting his winner from more than meter behind the line—and then was mobbed by his teammates.

Massimo Bulleri's jump shot gave Italy a 65-64 lead—its first since it was ahead 9-8 in the first quarter—before Lakovic converted two free throws. *AP*

DIRK Nowitzki tries to get a pass off the defense of Petr Benda. REUTERS

PHIL Mickelson hits out of a bunker on his way to the victory. REUTERS

Phil finally shoots down Tiger

NORTON, MASSACHUSETTS—PHIL Mickelson outplayed Tiger Woods on the front nine and closed with a 5-under 66 Monday to win the Deutsche Bank Championship by two shots.

It was the first victory for Mickelson since The Players Championship in May, after which he injured his wrist and lost much of the summer on the US golf tour.

Woods had only two birdies on the front and then made the turn with a bogey-5, putting him four shots behind Mickelson starting the final nine holes.

He wound up with a 67 and tied for second with Arron Oberholser (69) and Brett Wetterich (70).

"For 10 years I've struggled against Tiger," Mickelson said. "This sure feels great to go head-to-head. And over the last five or six holes when he's making a run, it was fun to match him with birdies."

Mickelson finished at 16-under 268 and earned $1.26 million, moving him atop the standings in the US PGA Tour Playoffs.

After dispatching of Woods, Mickelson picked his next battle with US PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem. He said he might not play next week outside Chicago at the BMW Championship, saying he owed it to the tour but that Finchem had not fulfilled some requests that Mickelson has made. He did not elaborate.

Mickelson, who moved back to No. 2 in the world ranking with his 32nd career victory, took only 23 putts in the final round and built a five-shot lead at the turn. *AP*

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Gov't allots ₱624B to service debts in '08

Interest payments to account for P295.8B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT WILL SPEND P624.1 BILLION next year to settle maturing obligations, 1.8-percent higher than the allocation for debt service of P612.8 billion this year, documents from the Department of Finance showed.

The amount of debt service next year is equivalent to 8.6 percent of the projected gross domestic product (GDP) of P7.28 trillion for 2008.

The debt service-to-GDP ratio of 8.6 percent will be lower than the 9.3 percent programmed for this year. The drop in the ratio, despite an increase in the absolute amount of debt service, is a result of the expected increase in economic output.

GDP is expected to rise to P7.28 trillion from the estimated P6.61 trillion this year.

The government's allocation for debt servicing has been consistently on the rise since the government started incurring budget deficits in the late 1990s. The deficits have forced the government to borrow heavily here and abroad.

The government's outstanding debt has ballooned to P3.78 trillion as of June this year.

Finance officials explained that the government's debt, and consequently the amount spent for debt servicing, would only begin to drop once the government starts posting a surplus in its budget.

The Finance documents, which were presented the other day to Congress during a hearing on the proposed 2008 national budget, also showed that of the amount allotted for debt service next year, the larger share of P328.3 billion will be for principal obligations. Interest payments will eat up P295.8 billion.

Only interest payments are automatically appropriated in the government's annual national budget. The allocation for payment of principal debts is usually from borrow-

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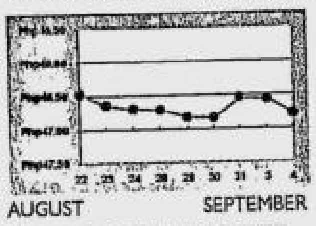

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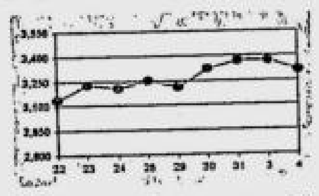

(See stock market report on Page B4)

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What You Don't Know Is Hurting You

For over two thousand years, mankind has been carrying out his business without the aid of electronic networks. One may be tempted to assume that we can continue doing business without the hassle of integrating more technology into the system. Pen-and-paper record keeping and physical delivery of information has been tried, tested, and abused over the years. The telephone and fax turned everything over its head in only good ways; it was the same case for the computer. Today the complexity and difficulty of converged network systems can be daunting, as can be the price.

But while you may think you are doing fine, you are losing out in profits to other, more efficient competitors – losing in ways you may not even know about. In today's rapid-paced world, even technologies such as faxes and regular voice-services are rendered obsolete by current trends, and you can forget about turning back to hand-driven methods of accounting and communications. Losses to the tune of 100 billion USD plague companies worldwide simply because of bad systems design, according to a study by Nielsen. Inefficiency; employee productivity squandered on mindless, repetitive tasks, missed opportunities, capital wasted on maintaining islands of systems that overlap imprudently – all of these add up to major losses.

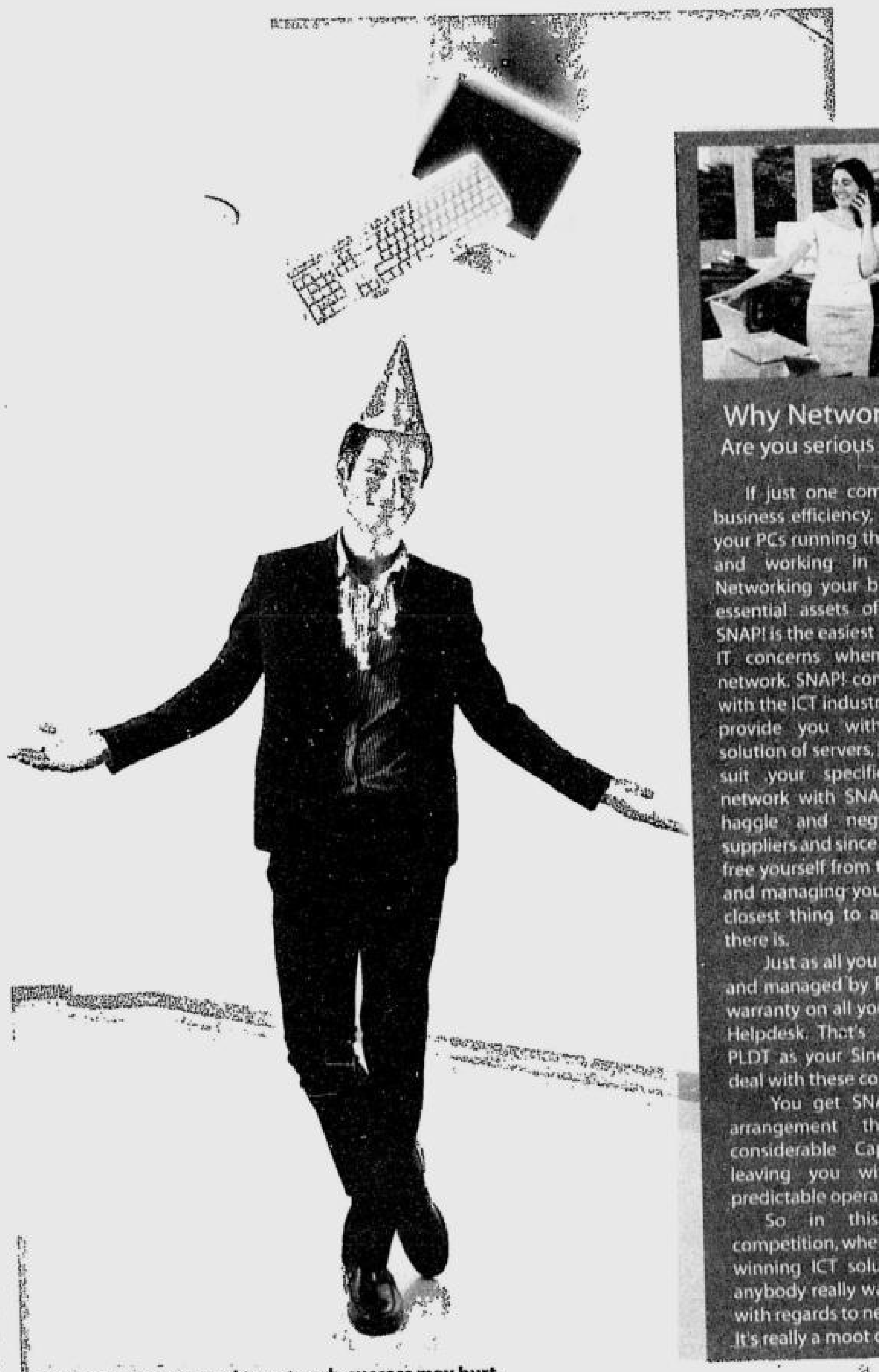
One way to describe the world today is to call it information-intensive. And having access – quick access – to relevant information about your business, and being able to distribute that information to all your stakeholders is vital to surviving in the market. In this way orders can be taken and processed quickly, and therefore acted upon. If uncertainties arise, an answer can quickly be acted on instead of analysis-paralysis. Better-informed decisions are more-profitable decisions. And decisions made without vital information can be disastrous.

What you have to consider is more than cost. Your better-equipped competitors may be racing past you in terms of growth and productivity, and it is getting harder and harder to play catch-up. In today's fast-paced, highly-competitive market, you simply cannot afford to lose any edge you have over competitors. Only a custom-fitted, highly effective information and communication technology (ICT) solution is a definite advantage to any kind of business. And more kinds of businesses are looking to this solution.

Nothing has really changed: reliable communications is a constant business need. PLDT, realizing this, began putting together a package to offer exactly this to businesses of all sizes, but without the complexities and costs inherent in setting up such an advanced network. It comes down to a question of specialization. Obviously, companies specialize in things other than communications networks. Their time is better spent attending to their core competencies. It makes more sense for them to ask someone who is already an expert at managing communications networks to handle it for them. It is more cost-effective than the alternative, committing resources such as employee time and effort, and capital for buying all the equipment necessary, into setting one up for yourself or doing without a network altogether.

SNAP! (Simplified Networks on Auto Pilot), PLDT's newest offering seeks to minimize costs and maximize gains for companies in need of either a whole new IT infrastructure or wishing to augment their current set-up. Set-up and maintenance is attended to by PLDT staff. Equipment is leased, not sold, to minimize capital expenses down to a small set-up fee, and to grant flexibility to the clients in regards to fast-paced technologies. Once needs expand further, adding in new components can be done in a snap – companies can choose from an array of hardware models available under the offering. And all the client has to do is use their new integrated network, without worrying about the details. They can leave that up to PLDT.

The name says it all: networks are simplified for their clients.



If you are not prepared to network, success may hurt.

Why Network with SNAP?

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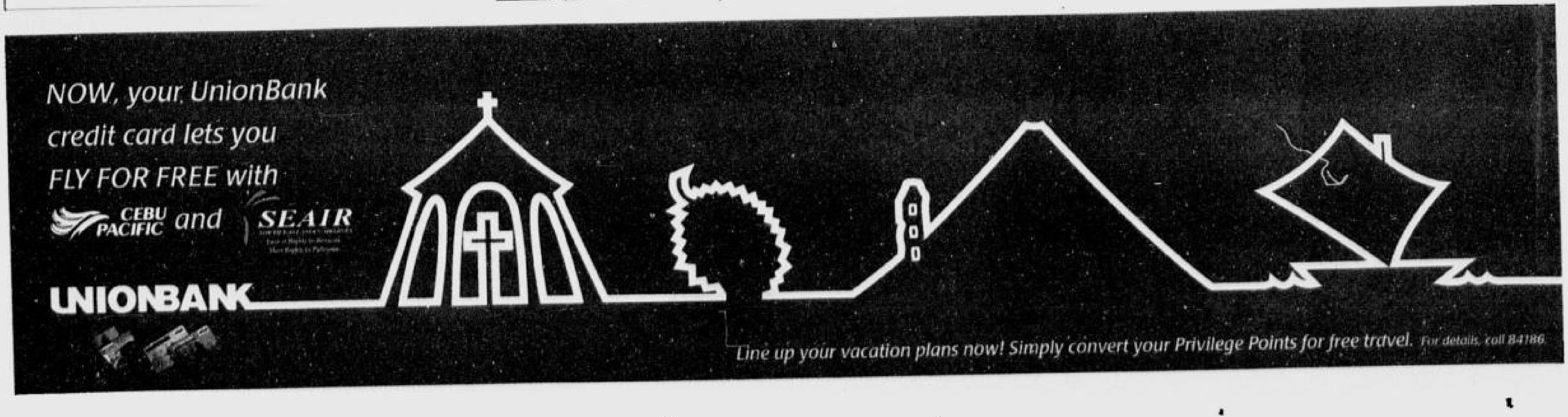
Just as all your solutions are provided and managed by PLDT, you also get a full warranty on all your hardware and an 8x5 Helpdesk. That's the benefit of having PLDT as your Single Point of Contact to deal with these concerns for you.

You get SNAP! on a straight-lease arrangement that frees you from considerable Capital Expense outlays, leaving you with a low fixed and predictable operating cost every month.

So in this age of increasing competition, where the guy who picks the winning ICT solution wins the day, can anybody really waffle and sit on the fence with regards to networking their business? It's really a moot question isn't it?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Meralco rates to go down this month

Utility says rates to decrease by 68.46 centavos per kWh

By Abigail L. Ho

LOWER PURCHASED POWER cost and system loss charge will lead to a reduction in the rates Manila Electric Co. charges its customers this month.

The rate would go down by as much as 68.46 centavos per kilowatt-hour (kWh), Meralco said.

According to data from the distribution utility, its generation charge for the month of September would be pegged at P4.6942 per kWh, 60.36 centavos per kWh lower than the P5.2978 per kWh charged in August.

The reduction in Meralco's generation charge was a result of lower purchased power costs from its power suppliers, which included the National Power Corp., the wholesale electricity spot market, and independent power producers First Gas Power Corp. and Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. Cost of power sourced from Napocor dropped to P5.1190 per kWh in September, as compared with P5.1869 per kWh last month. Power sourced from WESM also went down from P9.5469 per kWh in August to P5.1297 per kWh this month.

Meralco's IPPs however registered price increases.

The cost of power sourced from First Gas' 1,000-megawatt (MW) Sta. Rita plant increased from P4.2846 per kWh in August to P4.4377 per kWh in September, while that from the 500-MW San Lorenzo plant went up to P4.1634 per kWh from P3.8702 per kWh within the same period.

Power from QPPL plant also posted an increase to P4.0304 per kWh this month from P3.7683 per kWh last month.

But Meralco said its IPPs supplied it with power at the lowest costs, averaging P4.2681 per kWh.

Apart from lower generation costs, Meralco also saw a lower system loss charge for the August billing month, translating to a charge of only 76.87 centavos per kWh this month from 84.97 centavos per kWh last month.

"Last month, the generation charge was lower by 37.86 centavos per kWh while the system loss charge to residential users was down by 5.08 centavos per kWh," Meralco vice president for corporate communication Elpi Cuna said in a statement. "Residential customers, therefore, experienced a combined reduction of 42.94 centavos per kWh in August. With the additional combined reduction of 68.46 centavos per kWh this September, the cumulative reduction that residential customers will enjoy for August and September stands at P1.11 per kWh."

With these reductions, he added, residential customers consuming 100 kWh a month will see their bills go down by almost P60 this month, while those consuming 200 kWh will experience a P146 reduction.

Meralco's commercial and industrial customers would likewise experience a significant reduction in their electricity bills, the levels for which Cuna did not specify.

A mini-Marshall plan

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

SPEAKER JOSE DE-venecia is running out of original ideas. On the heels of the ongoing military offensive in Basilan and Sulu against the Abu Sayyaf, he proposes a mini-Marshall plan for the Muslim areas in Mindanao.

Gen. George C. Marshall was the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff during World War II and President Roosevelt's most trusted military adviser. After the war, President Truman appointed Marshall secretary of state.

The US came out of the war as the richest and most powerful nation in history. Marshall got the US Congress to approve a plan—inscribed forever as the Marshall Plan—to use American largesse to rebuild and rehabilitate war-torn and war-weary Western Europe, including former enemies, Germany and Italy, on a huge scale unheard of in all of history.

Awash with cash, the US granted extremely soft loans to Western Europe. To be sure, the plan was not a one-war street. The loans enabled Europe to buy goods from the US, thereby allowing American industry to shift from wartime to peacetime production.

It was not always cash that crossed the Atlantic. American mules were shipped to Greece to replenish stock lost during the war. The Greeks had to learn how to handle the cantankerous American mules, which were twice as large as the Greek cousins.

The Marshall plan was a rousing success. In the end, the Plan led to the setting up of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Nato), which held back the USSR, the Communist superpower.

If I recall right, it was then Vice President Teofisto Guingona who first proposed a mini-Marshall plan for Mindanao. Nothing came out of the proposal.

No mini-Marshall plan can be mounted and expected to succeed while the war against the Abu Sayyaf and the MILF goes on. The Marshall Plan succeeded because peace had settled down in Western Europe.

Also, we should learn from the Bicolano experience. Twice a year, for over 200 hundred years from 1580, Moro pirates raided Bicol for booty and slaves. The Moro fleet, of as many as 300 vintas, sailed along the Pacific side of the peninsula, entered San Miguel Bay in Camarines Sur, then up the Bicol River and all the way to the lakes.

Finally, in 1818, a combined fleet from Albay and Camarines, commanded by a retired captain of the Spanish navy, routed a large Moro pirate fleet off the Caramoan peninsula. Prince Nune, the Moro chief, was able to land in Albay. He was hunted down and executed.

The naval battle was the turning point in Bicol history. The Moros never returned and peace settled down. As fortune would have it, at about that time, the American shipping industry discovered that the abaca fiber in Albay was the best for nautical ropes.

The first 10 tons of the fiber (later tagged in the market as Manila hemp) was exported to the US that year. During the US civil war, the demand for the fiber rose, as the Union expanded its navy. By 1880, abaca fiber exports accounted for one-third of the country's dollar earnings. And Albay became the richest province.

De Venecia should use his tremendous persuasive powers to help the Armed Forces win the war in the shortest time possible. Then, and only then, should he mount a mini-Marshall plan.

ERC ruling seen to jack up power rates in Luzon

THE PHILIPPINE ELECTRICITY MARKET Corp., operator of the wholesale electricity spot market, will appeal an Energy Regulatory Commission ruling that can potentially boost Luzon power rates by as much as P2.60 per kilowatt-hour (kWh).

The ERC order in question effectively restored WESM's original high settlement prices for September and October last year.

The ERC ruling basically nullified the PEMC board's decision to reduce the prices for those two months, after its market surveillance committee reported market power abuse on the part of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

PSALM, which trades power generated by National Power Corp.'s independent power producers, accounts for more than 50 percent of power being sold at the electricity bourse.

PEMC president Lasse Holopainen said that, based on internal estimates, the ERC order would redound to an increase of P6.23 per megawatt-hour on the load weighted average prices for those two months.

This price increase, to be shouldered by entities that sourced power from the WESM during those months, would translate to an additional charge of around P2.60 per kWh for end-consumers.

"We'll file a motion for reconsideration as soon as our lawyers complete it," Holopainen said in an interview yesterday.

The ERC ruling came about after the commission conducted its own inquiry on the alleged price manipulation issue at the WESM. During the investigation, the regulatory body ordered an adjustment of WESM prices for those months to match Napocor's time-of-use rates which, at that time, were lower than the actual WESM settlement prices.

The ERC, however, said it found no prima facie evidence against PSALM to merit further investigation. In light of this, the regulatory body ordered the PEMC board to reinstate the originally questioned high prices in September and October 2006. *Abigail L. Ho*

Stick to trade rules, DTI cautions crab exporters

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE and Industry yesterday urged exporters of live crabs and lobsters to adhere to Taiwan's strict rules for shipments to maintain access to that lucrative market.

According to DTI data, exporters were able to post P600 million in earnings in the past four months, after Taipei lifted its temporary ban of cargoes from the Philippines.

In December 2006, Taiwanese authorities informed the DTI's Bureau of Export Trade Promotion that it was suspending exports from the Philippines because traces of nirofurans—an antibiotic that is banned for fishery and aquaculture use—were found in some previous shipments of live rock and spiny lobsters.

Taiwan authorities believed that exporters, in a bid to decrease lobster mortality rate while in transit, may have used the banned antibiotic substances at the port of shipment.

Trade Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino said the suspension was lifted after the government set up monitoring, control, and corrective measures to check the antibiotic residues of lobster exports.

He said the DTI, through the Trade and Investment Office in Taipei and the BETP, and the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources took part in addressing the issue.

"The collaborative efforts of (these) agencies, and representatives of marine exporters were key drivers that hastened the lifting of the ban," Aquino said.

"(This) prevented the loss of $11 million (about P510 million) worth of live crabs and live lobsters valued at $2 million (about P93 million)," he added. Long-term damage to the Philippine seafood exporters was also averted.

Aquino said that for exporters to maintain their access to the Taiwanese market, they must be accredited with BFAR.

NFA out to ensure stability of rice prices in lean months

By Amy R. Remo

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUthority is implementing several strategies to ensure the stability of rice prices and supply during the lean production months.

According to NFA Administrator Jessup P. Navarro, these strategies are meant to avert any upward movement in the price of rice.

"It will complement efficient rice distribution even as stocks have already been positioned for immediate market infusion," he said.

These strategies include strict market monitoring through the Palengke Watch program, where NFA officials are tasked to conduct market inspection.

Other programs include the monitoring of price movements of commercial rice stocks, and increasing rice allocation as incentives to retailers that adhere strictly to the rules of rice trading.

"We are always ready to intervene in the market to preempt any unwarranted increase in prices, especially during the lean production period to ensure that rice is within reach of every Filipino," Navarro said.

He also assured consumers that the price of government rice will remain stable at P18 a kilo.

The NFA, he said, has also built up sufficient rice inventory for food security until the end of the year.

The agency has contracted a total of 1.89 million metric tons in rice imports for food security.

The total volume is slated to arrive in the country by September this year, he said.

As of the third week of August, about 1 million metric tons, or about 67 percent, of the total rice imports have already arrived to augment the NFA's inventory, said Navarro.

The NFA's good quality low-priced rice, according to Navarro, is available through the Tindahan Natin rice outlets, the Bigasan ni Gloria sa Palengke and the agency's accredited and licensed retailers.

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Japanese company pushes Ilocos coco project

600,000 hectares needed for biofuel feedstock

By Amy R. Remo

JAPANESE FIRM TOYO ENGINEERING Corp. is set to complete a feasibility study on an integrated coco methyl-ester (CME) manufacturing plant that it plans to put up in the Ilocos region.

The venture, which will require at least P60 billion, will need around 600,000 hectares of coconut farms in new areas.

The new farmlands will use high-yielding coconut varieties.

Carlos B. Carpio, deputy administrator of the Philippine Coconut Authority, said Toyo Engineering was looking at the possibility of developing fresh or new areas where coconut can be planted to supply the feedstock requirement of the CME plant.

Toyo Engineering is reportedly considering areas in Region 1 such as Pangasinan, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte and La Union.

Another alternative, according to Carpio, was to use the wide coastal areas of these provinces.

He estimated that opening up new areas for coconut farms would require a bigger investment of about P1 million a hectare, while using coastal areas would need only P100,000 per hectare.

The entire output of the plant will be shipped to Japan to supply the country's growing demand for biofuels, both for fuel-dependent industries and manufacturing concerns and also for its automotive industry, which is now producing hybrid vehicles.

Japan's total diesel requirement reaches 40 billion liters a year and plans for a CME blend of 5 percent will create a huge demand for this additive.

It is one of the four Asian countries planning to mandate the blending of CME with petro-diesel to reduce dependence on crude mineral oil.

The local coconut industry, which has yet to recover from the devastating effects of typhoons Reming and Milenyo last year, recorded a decline in output of 4.93 percent in the first half of 2007.

Coconut prices, however, bounced back from last year's slump and increased by 23.97 percent this year.

The increase in copra prices triggered the demand for matured coconut that, in turn, pushed up prices at the farm level.

Demand for Philippine agricultural lands has been surging with the interest especially among Chinese companies.

Among the companies from China, Nanning Yong has firmed up negotiations with three local companies for the construction of three separate bioethanol plants worth a combined $105 million.

Documents from the Department of Agriculture showed that Nanning Yong is pursuing partnerships with SB Integrated Biofuels Co., Negros Southern Integrated Biofuels and One Cagayan Resource Development Inc.

Another company, Jilin Fuhua Agricultural Science and Technology Development Co. Ltd., has started ground validation and seed testing on farms for hybrid corn and sweet sorghum in Cagayan Valley, Isabela, Nueva Ecija and Pangasinan.

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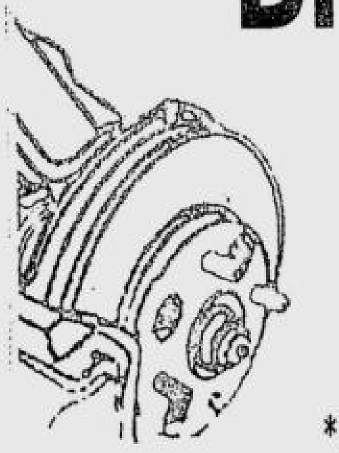

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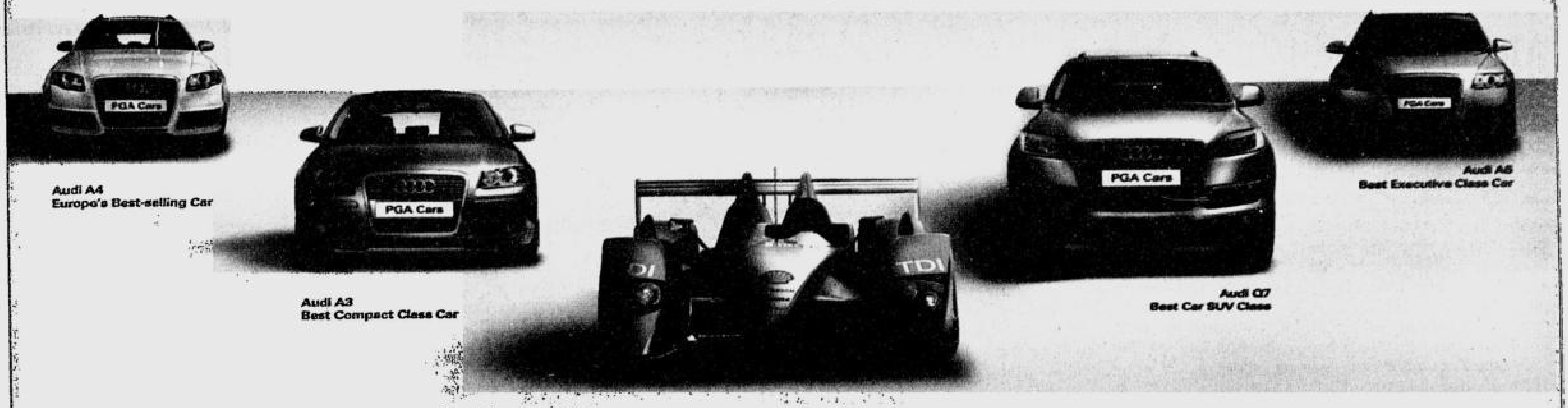

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STI plans to raise ₱1.5B from public offering

Eyes listing on Singapore, RP bourses

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE (STI), one of the country's biggest networks of information and communications technology-centered colleges, is planning to list on the Singapore Stock Exchange and on the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) starting next year, STI executive committee chair Eusebio Tanco said.

On the sidelines of a signing ceremony at the PSE in Makati late Monday, Tanco said STI could raise at least P1.5 billion from a possible listing of roughly 30 percent of the company's capitalization of P5 billion.

After an initial public offering (IPO), STI's market capitalization is expected to swell to P10 billion (about $200 million).

Proceeds from the offering are expected to fund the school's expansion, including a P250-million school building at the Fort Bonifacio Global City in Taguig City. The school, which will have an area of 2,700 square meters along the University Parkway, will be completed by June next year, Tanco said.

The lease contract for the new school building was recently awarded to STI by the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) for its Campus Gateway project.

The eight-story complex will house a modern school, a research and development center and state-of-the-art gymnasium. It is part of STI's P1.5-billion expansion program that also included the recent establishment of the DLS-STI Megaclinic in Megamall, investment in Delos Santos-STI Medical Center and the ongoing expansion of STI campuses through the acquisition of properties in various areas nationwide.

Tanco added that STI was building a 2,000-square meter campus in Cebu.

He said STI was in a shopping mode for campuses or other schools to expand its course offerings.

Information and Communications Technology Academy, or iAcademy, which is a part of the STI family, recently partnered with PSE to offer to the public a 12-session course starting in October on financial analysis. The course will allow students to acquire more sophisticated skills in participating in the stock market.

Pacifica gets SEC nod to return to mining

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE Commission (SEC) has approved the application of listed holding company Pacifica Inc. to return to the mining business.

In a disclosure, Pacifica said the SEC approved last Sept. 3 changes to its articles of incorporation and the par value of its shares from P1 to P0.005.

In view of this, the Philippine Stock Exchange has lifted a trading suspension on the company implemented last July 19.

Under Pacifica's amended articles of incorporation, its primary purpose will now allow it to engage in the discovery, exploration, development and exploitation of mineral oils and gaseous substances, gold, silver, copper, iron and other metals or metal ores.

Pacifica was also able to secure the consent of the SEC to extend its corporate life for another 50 years after the expiry date last Sept. 2.

Pacifica was incorporated on Sept. 2, 1957. On April 29, 1998, the stockholders approved the change in the primary purpose of the company from a mining to a holding company.

The company has not commenced operations since the change in its primary purpose from a mining to a holding company in 1998, it disclosed in a recent financial report. In addition, there were no major activities undertaken by the company from 1998 to 2006.

Also, the company incurred continuing net losses which resulted in a deficit of P83.62 million and P80 million as of the end of 2006 and 2005, respectively.

Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

BSP urged to liberalize FCDUs

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS was urged to ease restrictions in unit investment trust funds (UITFs) and foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs) as part of its efforts to bring down barriers to overseas investments.

BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla Jr. told reporters the banking regulator recently received proposals from banks to include the liberalization of investments in FCDUs and UITFs in its ongoing foreign exchange deregulation program.

"The idea is that UITFs could also invest overseas. That's their idea but we haven't made any decision on it," Espenilla said.

The BSP earlier doubled to $12 million the amount of investments that residents can invest abroad without having to seek approval from the policy-making Monetary Board.

Espenilla said the earlier liberalization covered only individual investors and thus did not include UITFs.

UITFs, an improvement of the common trust funds, are investments pooled by banks' trust departments from retail clients that are invested in a variety of instruments and marked-to-market values.

Espenilla said the BSP has also received a proposal from banks to liberalize dollar purchases for FCDUs.

"We're still studying it," he said.

A few years ago when the peso was under heavy pressure in the foreign exchange market, the BSP cracked down on dollars parked in FCDUs to curb opportunities to use these deposit accounts as an instrument to speculate against the local currency.

The proposals to ease restrictions in UITFs and FCDUs as part of an ongoing liberalization program were mentioned in a joint publication by the University of Asia & the Pacific and the First Metro group.

"The BSP should liberalize the capital account by allowing ordinary citizens (not only large firms) to diversify their portfolios with solid foreign currency denominated assets including buying dollars for FCDU account and allowing banks UITFs to include foreign shares," the publication said.

"Such a policy would not only allow the country's aggregate savings to be diversified it would also reflect the internalization of our population given that around eight million Filipinos live and work in countries all over the globe," it explained.

Stocks close 1.7% lower on Meralco selloff

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.7-PERcent lower yesterday with the key index dragged down by an extended selloff in Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), the nation's biggest power distributor, dealers said.

They said Meralco was again punished amid fears its profits will be hurt by a lower tariff rate set by regulators.

The composite index fell 56.84 points at 3,312.30, off the day's low of 3,308.97, on volume of to 2.7 billion shares worth P3.2 billion.

Decliners outnumbered gainers 105 to 22, while 44 stocks ended flat.

The broader all-share index slipped 32.28 points at 2,114.57.

"The downturn was induced by the selloff in Meralco. It prompted other investors to take profits early on from the recent gains," said Francisco Liboro of PCCI Securities.

Liboro said foreign funds further unloaded Meralco shares in anticipation of a stock dividend declaration today by the power company.

"The foreign mentality with regard to stock dividends is more negative" than how local investors see it, Liboro said.

Meantime, some local brokerages "may have imputed in their forecast the full rate hike that Meralco was eyeing." With no firmer leads in sight, investors chose to lock in profits from recent gains in blue chips.

"Most investors realized gains from the previous rallies while others opted to wait on how the resumption in trading of US stocks tonight will fare," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities. *AFP*

Gov't allots ₱624B . . .

From page B1

ings. The amount for payment of principal debt next year will eat up 95 percent of the P346.1 billion that the government intends to borrow in 2008.

The amount of principal payments for next year is 6 percent higher than the P309.5 billion set for this year. The increase in principal payments is consistent with the government's aim of hastening debt reduction.

The government wants to reduce its debts to levels considered "sustainable" by credit-rating agencies. According to international standards, a debt is considered "sustainable" if it is 50 percent or less of GDP.

The government's outstanding debt is projected to reach P3.95 trillion next year, equivalent to 54.2 percent of GDP. This will be a slight improvement from the 59.4 percent estimated for this year.

Finance officials said the government could easily reduce its debts to sustainable levels after posting a balanced budget next year.

The government's target of balancing the budget next year is anchored on the expected increase in revenue collection arising from tighter audit of tax collection and the sale of government assets deemed better run by the private sector.

CURRENCIES

September 4, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.734322	1.000000	46.4270
Japan	Yen	0.006335	0.008627	0.4005
United Kingdom	Pound	1.482450	2.018800	93.7268
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.094215	0.128302	5.9567
Switzerland	Franc	0.607883	0.827815	38.4330
Canada	Dollar	0.697826	0.950299	44.1195
Singapore	Dollar	0.482092	0.656513	30.4799
Australia	Dollar	0.602052	0.819874	38.0643
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.947959	2.652731	123.1583
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.195798	0.266638	12.3792
Brunei	Dollar	0.480515	0.654365	30.3802
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000079	0.000107	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.022770	0.031008	1.4396
UAE	Dirham	0.199952	0.272294	12.6418
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.361800	63.2243
Korea	Won	0.000784	0.001067	0.0495
China	Yuan**	0.097334	0.132550	6.1539
Denmark	Kroner	0.134287	0.182872	8.4902
India	Rupee	0.018051	0.024582	1.1413
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.209806	0.285714	13.2648
New Zealand	Dollar	0.515278	0.701705	32.5781
Sweden	Kroner	0.106416	0.144917	6.7281
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022248	0.030298	1.4066

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Sept. 3, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Sept. 3, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 4, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	9.1	9.2	9.1	9.2	13,000
73	36.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	56	56.5	56	56.5	783,800
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	61.5	61.5	60.5	61	525,200
935	630	China Banking Corp.	815	815	815	815	7,720
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.4	990,000
75.5	38	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	58	58	56.5	57.5	1,774,900
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	46.5	46.5	45	45	129,800
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	62	63.5	62	62	1,000
39.57	14.57	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	24.5	24.5	24.25	24.25	609,000
90	49.5	Security Bank Corp.	72.5	72.5	72.5	72.5	4,500
66	42.53	Union Bank of the Philippines	54	56	54	56	139,200
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	2.22	2.22	2.1	2.16	5,721,000
16.25	2.26	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	12.75	12.75	11.75	12	1,810,300
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	40,000
42	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	41	41	1,000
1,760.00	1,555.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,750.00	1,750.00	1,750.00	1,750.00	410
5	2.95	Nat'l Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.35	3.35	3.2	3.3	1,811,000
3.1	1	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.82	1.86	1.82	1.84	73,000
1,005.00	220	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	780	785	760	785	2,100
2,250.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,200.00	2,200.00	2,150.00	2,200.00	210
1.94	1.3	IVantage Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.46	151,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.2	5.3	5.1	5.1	7,662,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
70	47.5	First Gen Corp.	63.5	63.5	62.5	62.5	957,400
92	44	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	77	77	75	75.5	1,362,000
15	8.8	Manila Water Company Inc.	14.25	14.5	14.25	14.5	696,700
116	17.25	Manila Electric Company	88	88	83.5	85	9,608,700
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	15,849,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.4	5.6	1,739,000
14.75	6.7	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.4	15,000
1.9	0.95	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.18	1.22	1,000,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.95	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	734,000
2.95	1.86	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2	2	1.96	1.98	52,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	500
61	33	Jollibee Foods Corp.	54	54.5	53.5	54	183,700
1.96	0.78	RFM Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.64	1.64	400,000
3.85	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	32,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. A	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	15,500
88	60	San Miguel Corp. B	67.5	67.5	66.5	67	97,300
0.66	0.22	Swift Foods Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	40,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	752,800
0.55	0.205	Vitarich Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.35	0.35	610,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.59	EEI Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.5	592,000
9.2	4.75	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.7	7.9	7.7	7.7	4,630,000
7	1.28	Republic Cement Corp.	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.85	33,000
2	0.28	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.16	1.16	10,512,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.1	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.3	3,473,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	10,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.1	Picop Resources Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	4,350,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.82	A. Soriano Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	20,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	8,600,000
1.28	0.21	APC Group Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.57	0.58	4,500,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. A	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.9	412,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. A	0.0095	0.01	0.0095	0.01	45,000,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	9,900,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,249,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	44,500,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.3	5.4	5.2	5.3	8,139,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.26	2.26	2.16	2.2	1,553,000
590	370.83	Ayala Corp.	495	495	470	470	106,690
14.5	7.04	Bacnotan Cons. Industries Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	15,400
5.8	1.14	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.05	4.05	3.8	4	18,677,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.3	2,032,000
6.9	1.06	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	140,000
2.5	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. A	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	60,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.6	70,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.84	1.84	3,480,000
14.5	5.7	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	9.8	9.8	9.7	9.7	9,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	20,000
11.5	0.98	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.4	4.45	1,857,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.1	7.2	541,000
0.17	0.01	Pacifica Inc. A	0.13	0.14	0.105	0.105	918,780,000
1.54	0.77	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.77	0.8	0.77	0.8	150,000
0.75	0.17	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	610,000
452.5	212.91	SM Investments Corp.	390	390	372.5	375	98,130
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.32	0.32	4,410,000
1.6	0.88	South China Resources Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.36	1.36	75,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	18.5	18.5	18.25	18.5	16,200
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.33	2,580,000
1.1	0.22	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	60,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.78	A Brown Company Inc.	1.46	1.56	1.46	1.52	10,772,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.5	6.8	100,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.68	0.68	1,030,000
19.25	11.25	Ayala Land Inc.	14.25	14.5	14	14	1,580,800
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.1	1,359,000
4.7	2.26	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.75	3.75	3.7	3.7	146,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	1,000,000
0.99	0.48	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.69	6,850,000
0.47	0.048	Ever Gotesco Res. and Hold'gs Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.215	0.22	5,450,000
1.48	0.43	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.1	1.12	8,507,000
2.44	1.09	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.5	1.54	20,819,000
0.49	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. A	0.29	0.31	0.29	0.31	130,000
0.5	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	150,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	5,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.57	0.61	590,000
4.4	1.62	Megaworld Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.35	3.4	19,506,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.7	3.95	3.7	3.7	4,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.34	60,000
0.87	0.32	Phil. Realty & Holdings Corp.	0.45	0.47	0.45	0.46	5,850,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	79,000
23	12.5	Robinson Land Corp.	18.25	18.75	18.25	18.75	1,002,700
5.9	1.4	SM Development Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.1	4.1	341,000
13.5	6.24	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.75	11.75	11	11.5	11,157,600
3.25	0.84	Shang Properties Inc.	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	96,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	120,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.24	0.245	2,020,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	5	5.1	5	5.1	4,571,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	16	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	30	31.5	30	31.5	71,700
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc.	10	10	9.6	9.9	472,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.22	632,000
1,445.00	995	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,375.00	1,380.00	1,365.00	1,370.00	80,070
2,820.00	1,935.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,675.00	2,680.00	2,660.00	2,665.00	68,410
7.9	4.1	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.9	7	6.8	7	966,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	200,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9.9	9.9	9.1	9.8	203,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.9	8.9	8.6	8.8	1,577,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.03	0.03	0.029	0.029	76,200,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. A	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	11,700
2.9	1.6	Ionics Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	210,000
0.32	0.043	Island Info & Technology Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.18	71,510,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.048	0.049	37,300,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Grp Int'l. Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.36	2.36	395,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	2.06	2.08	2.02	2.06	3,282,000
6.8	3.05	Asian Terminals Inc.	3.95	3.95	3.95	3.95	125,000
34.5	14.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	32	32.5	32	32	50,500
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	1,520,000
2.04	1.02	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	100,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.78	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.85	2.85	335,000
0.98	0.3	Premiere Entertainment Prod'n Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	1,080,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.77	0.78	0.77	0.78	2,900,000
		EDUCATION					
9.8	7.2	Centro Escolar University	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.7	7,000
950	650	Far Eastern University Inc.	880	880	880	880	2,090
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc.	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.6	104,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
7.5	3	Easycall Comm. Phils. Inc.	4	4	4	4	7,000
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.15	4.2	326,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.5	11.75	51,000
30	9.9	Paxys Inc.	15	15	14.5	14.5	918,000
		MINING					
0.018	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.01	376,500,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	55,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	4.55	4.6	4.55	4.55	116,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	14	14	13.25	13.75	991,100
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	9.7	9.8	9.7	9.8	11,000
5	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	100,000
3.1	0.33	GEOGRACE Res. Philippines Inc.	1.52	1.54	1.42	1.46	45,490,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.23	0.23	0.225	0.23	22,790,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	168,600,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.022	0.024	0.022	0.024	21,700,000
30	1.2	NIHAO Minerals Res. Int'l Inc.	11	11.25	10.25	10.25	1,061,400
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	79,700,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	2,239,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	30	30	30	30	17,600
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.94	0.95	330,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.16	1.18	1,539,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.35	5,670,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	156,400,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.022	4,200,000
11.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2	13,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.021	363,000,000

AVERAGES				VOLUME	
Financial	872.87	DOWN	4.94	14,588,440	256,588,840.00
Industrial	4,545.42	DOWN	100.56	96,257,600	1,740,291,550.00
Holding Firms	1,840.86	DOWN	65.95	1,077,644,220	370,493,490.00
Property	1,497.05	DOWN	33.33	103,296,100	329,334,620.00
Service	1,599.47	DOWN	7.24	200,704,470	374,059,835.00
Mining & Oil	5,545.18	DOWN	148.76	1,250,523,100	134,595,410.00
All Shares Index	2,114.57	DOWN	32.28		
PSEI	3,312.30	DOWN	56.84		
		GRAND TOTALS		2,743,013,930	3,205,363,745.00

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SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

RP seen to meet GDP target

BSP expects economy to grow by at least 6.1% in '07

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS is confident that the country's economy will grow as expected—anywhere from 6.1 to 6.7 percent—despite the projected slowdown in export earnings this second semester.

"There are certain developments in the US and Europe that may affect the performance of Philippine exports, particularly when consumption wealth channel kicks in, that will result in some moderation of demand for export products," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters at the sidelines of a congressional hearing.

"That can now affect our growth ... there may be changes in the speed, but we're confident that the 6.1-6.7 percent (growth in gross domestic product) will be met," he said.

GDP, the single most important indicator of economic performance, refers to the total amount of goods and services produced by the domestic economy in a given period.

In the second quarter, the country posted a GDP growth of 7.5 percent—the highest in 20 years—which brought the first semester average growth to an impressive 7.3 percent.

However, rising delinquency in the high-risk or subprime housing mortgage market in the United States has caused a credit crunch in the world's largest economy and created negative ripples across global financial markets. This came about after several US banks invested in structured financial products exposed to the problematic housing sector.

A possible slowdown in the US economy, the biggest consumer of Philippine exports, is thus expected to weigh down on the country's export earnings. Also, stiff competition among global suppliers of electronic products is seen to depress export earnings of local manufacturers.

For this year, the BSP itself has cut its export growth forecast to 8 percent from 11 percent.

Exporters have also complained about the adverse impact of the peso's appreciation against the US dollar this year.

"The peso is determined by market forces," Tetangco said. "The role of the BSP is to basically smoothen sharp fluctuation in the rates. What you see now is the result of the factors that are taking place in the domestic market as well as abroad."

The BSP chief was referring to the strong influx of remittances from overseas Filipinos, as well as foreign investments that had jacked up peso value against the US dollar by 5 percent so far this year.

"What we have done is to use this opportunity of substantial foreign exchange inflows to build up our reserves that has, in effect, increased demand for dollars," Tetangco said.

He added that the BSP and the national government had also used excess dollars flowing in the system to pay off some foreign debts ahead of maturity.

Uncertainties on the weather, on top of continuing global financial market jitters, have also prompted the government's economic managers to be cautious over growth forecasts for the rest of the year.

"We'll stick to the 6.1-6.7 percent (target)," Finance Secretary Margarito Teves told reporters in a separate interview. "I don't want to predict anything higher than that. You never know what the environment will look like in the next six months.

"We're hopeful that we'll go beyond the target but we won't say it with certainty."

Pharma-funded NGO hits Roxas medicine bill

By Daxim L. Lucas

AN INTERNATIONAL LOBBY group allied with the global pharmaceutical industry has urged policymakers to address structural weaknesses in the local healthcare system, like the poor utilization of the national health insurance scheme.

At the same time, the London-based International Policy Network (IPN) did not agree with the need to relax the patents law as advocated by Sen. Manuel A. Roxas II, while conceding that Filipinos' access to medicine remains limited.

A statement released by the group and distributed in yesterday's "Symposium on Intellectual Property, Innovation and Health" quoted IPN director of policy Philip Stevens, who questioned whether patents really do drive up drug prices and deprive the poor of access to healthcare.

"Framing the issue in such black and white terms distracts attention form the real causes of ill health in countries such as the Philippines, which revolve more around poverty and inadequate health infrastructure," he said.

Stevens added that "it is time to leave rhetoric and ideology aside and recognize and deal with the actual causes of poor rates of access to medicines for the most disadvantaged."

"Rates of access to essential medicine—majority of which are off-patent—are unacceptably low in many parts of the world," the group said.

According to the Center for Media and Democracy's sourcewatch.org website, IPN "is a corporate-funded campaigning group based in the United Kingdom."

The "great majority" of IPN's income from donations is from corporations, the watchdog said.

Yesterday's healthcare forum at the Manila Hotel also had as a speaker economist Bienvenido Oplas Jr., who stressed the need to pinpoint the exact hindrance to access to medicines by the poor.

"Is it patents by multinational pharmaceutical companies, or certain policies by government such as taxes and tariffs on medicines, or the other health infrastructure, or what?" he asked.

The economist challenged the view that patent laws are the cause of expensive medicines in the country, as stressed by Senator Roxas.

"If it can be established that the restrictive patent system by pharmaceutical companies is the main culprit, then more government regulation is the answer," he said.

Local IT firm opens salvo of acquisitions

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL FIRM GURANGO SOFTware Corp. yesterday announced it had acquired international firm Absalom Systems in the first of a planned series of overseas acquisitions.

GSC chief executive Joey Gurango said in a statement his company was acquiring Absalom's operations in Singapore, Australia and South Africa for $3 million, a move that would quadruple GSC's client network.

GSC develops proprietary software solutions, delivers implementation services, and provides after-sales support services to clients around the world, while Absalom develops and markets human resource information systems and solutions.

"GSC plans to integrate Absalom's existing, proprietary products and services into its own portfolio of complementary products and services, which would extend the GSC solution portfolio," Gurango said.

He added that the Absalom acquisition provided GSC ownership of the intellectual rights to Absalom's popular Smart HR and Employee Self-Service (ESS) solutions.

Smart HR is a suite of applications that enables companies to efficiently manage HR functions and processes electronically.

ESS is a Smart HR module that allows employees to update personal records, request and manage leave credits, and keep other employment and personal information up-to-date.

Further, Gurango said the acquisition was the first step in the implementation of a strategic plan to accelerate growth through acquisitions of midsize software consulting firms and rights to intellectual property that complement GSC's own products and services.

"The market for vertical software is expanding very rapidly," he said. "To provide maximum leverage in meeting this demand, we need to complement our organic growth by acquiring companies whose product portfolios complement ours."

The combined company would consist of a shared back office in Manila delivering product development, customer service, and information and communications technology services for all clients.

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Asia stocks hit 1-month highs, but Nikkei dips

Worries over global credit squeeze ease; all eyes on US data

HONG KONG—ASIAN STOCKS touched one-month highs yesterday as worries about a global credit squeeze continued to recede, but caution ahead of influential US data this week kept a lid on markets and major currencies.

Tokyo's Nikkei sagged as investors worried about recent disappointing economic data, while safe-haven Japanese government bonds (JGBs) rose after an auction of 10-year notes attracted fair demand.

"The worst from the US subprime mortgage crisis appears to be over, and the main question left is whether the Fed will lower interest rates at its Sept. 18 meeting," said Kim Hak-kyun, an analyst at Korea Investment and Securities.

MSCI's measure of Asia Pacific stocks excluding Japan rose 0.5 percent by early yesterday afternoon after earlier reaching levels last seen on Aug. 1, but Tokyo's Nikkei average fell 0.6 percent, extending Monday's 0.3-percent dip.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index hit a record high, led by China Construction Bank after Beijing said it would review the lender's plans for a domestic share sale.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 index climbed for a fourth straight session, up 0.4 percent at a six-week closing high, boosted by data showing stronger-than-expected economic growth in the past quarter.

Korea Exchange Bank finished 1.7 percent higher, after climbing as much as 8.2 percent at one stage following news that Europe's biggest bank HSBC will buy 51 percent of the South Korean lender.

HSBC's Hong Kong shares edged up 0.1 percent.

The MSCI index has risen in the past two weeks and is now up 19 percent from a five-month trough plumbed on Aug. 17 but still down about 5 percent from its July 24 record high.

Markets have generally been on a recovery path since the US Federal Reserve slashed a key bank lending rate on Aug. 17 to help soothe fears of a credit shortage stemming from the US subprime mortgage crisis.

Comments from US President George W. Bush and Fed chair Ben Bernanke late last week about tackling the credit problem have further helped shore up sentiment.

Forex investors took a wait-and-see attitude ahead of a flood of US data, keeping the major currencies in a narrow range.

"The panic is almost over, but the market has lost its direction and is waiting for more news, especially any good news," said Kikuko Takeda, currency strategist at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ. "People know it'll take some time to restore normal market conditions. There is no quick solution."

The dollar bought 115.81 yen little changed from 115.97 yen in London trade on Monday, while the euro was at $1.3622 compared with $1.3624 in London.

Against the yen, the single currency was also steady near 157.76 yen.

But the Australian dollar jumped to a week high near 82.70 US cents after strong economic growth data revived speculation of interest rate hikes.

Japan's benchmark 10-year JGB yield eased two basis points to 1.615 percent after the 10-year JGB auction. *Reuters*

Oil prices rise on hurricane concerns

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES ROSE YESTERDAY as traders monitored the pace and track of an Atlantic hurricane on concerns the storm could hurt oil and gas infrastructure in the Gulf of Mexico.

Light, sweet crude for October delivery rose 8 cents from Friday's close to $74.12 a barrel in Asian electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange, midmorning in Singapore.

Floor trade was closed Monday for the US Labor Day holiday. Friday, the October Nymex crude contract added 68 cents to settle at $74.04 a barrel, a four-week high.

Prices have been supported by worries over Hurricane Felix, which grew into a Category 5 storm Monday before losing a bit of its punch and weakening to a Category 4 as it churned its way into the open waters of the Caribbean Sea. By Tuesday in Asia, Felix looked less likely to hit the Gulf of Mexico, where key refineries are located.

Crude oil prices rose as much as 56 cents from Friday's close in electronic trading overnight as traders eyed the movement of the hurricane.

"Market participants are keeping an eye on Hurricane Felix, but at this point it doesn't really look like it'll affect oil and gas facilities in the Gulf of Mexico, and also, it has weakened to a Category 4 storm," said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Felix's top winds weakened slightly to 215 kph (135 mph) as it headed west, but forecasters warned that it could strengthen again before landfall along the Miskito Coast early Tuesday. From there, it was projected to rake northern Honduras, slam into southern Belize on Wednesday and then cut across northern Guatemala and southern Mexico, well south of Texas.

"But the hurricane is a reminder to everybody that we're entering the peak hurricane season, so the crude oil futures market continues to face upward exposure," Shum said.

Oil prices have also been supported by US government reports that consumer spending and factory orders rose in July. Energy investors pay close attention to economic data because an economy's strength is seen as a barometer of demand for oil and gasoline.

October Brent crude futures fell 15 cents to $73.26 a barrel on the ICE futures exchange in London. *AP*

A WORKER clears up newly picked cotton at a farm in Shihezi, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. China's rapidly expanding economy risks boiling over although overall demand is not currently exceeding supply, a senior official said on Tuesday.

REUTERS

Coal rush worsens global warming—WWF

SYDNEY—GROWING DEPENDENCE on cheap coal to power rapid economic growth in the Asia Pacific could undermine efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that is blamed for harmful changes in the world's climate, experts said on Tuesday.

Between 2001 and 2006, coal use around the world grew by an unprecedented 30 percent. Asia, led by China, accounted for almost 90 percent of the growth, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said at the launch of a climate change report in Sydney.

"The Asia Pacific region is at a critical moment with regard to coal use, and is grappling with the difficult question of how to balance burgeoning energy needs with the well-being of the planet and local communities," the WWF report said.

Coal, the most abundant conventional fossil fuel, is responsible for a quarter of the world's total carbon emissions.

According to the International Energy Association, economic growth in India and China will account for 70 percent of the increase in global coal consumption by 2030, primarily in the electricity and industrial sectors.

The WWF said coal-related carbon emissions increased by 31 percent between 1990 and 2004. If left unchecked, global coal-related emissions will increase by 63 percent by 2030, compared to required greenhouse gas reductions of about 50 percent by 2050 to keep climate change at manageable levels.

To avoid the dangerous environmental impact of climate change, governments must reduce the use of fossil fuels and ensure that new coal-fired power stations be equipped with low or zero emissions using carbon capture and storage technology, the report said.

The WWF also recommended that Asia Pacific countries increase the use of renewable energy, develop zero-emission technologies and put a stop to large-scale deforestation.

Climate change is a major focus at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit in Sydney this week.

The WWF urged Apec countries, which account for about 60 percent of the world's economy, to set binding targets on emission reductions in a post-2012 climate treaty.

The first phase of the UN Koyoto Protocol climate change pact runs out in 2012 and there are growing diplomatic efforts to find a formula that brings rich and developing nations together to curb emissions growth of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

Scientists say time is running out to stop climate changes caused by a buildup of these gases in the atmosphere.

Big polluters such as China, India, the United States and Australia are firmly opposed to binding emissions cuts, saying this will harm their economies.

Developing nations also want rich countries to agree to deep cuts first, blaming the industrialized world for much of the greenhouse gas pollution already in the air.

While no binding targets for greenhouse gas reductions are expected to be agreed at the Apec summit, analysts say officials might back a consensus on a replacement for Kyoto. *Reuters*

Asia luxury market seen growing 12%

HONG KONG DEMAND FOR LUXURY goods and services in Asia could grow by 12 percent a year to reach $258.7 billion in 2016, reflecting the region's rising affluence, MasterCard projected on Tuesday.

In China and India, the fastest growing of Asia's major economies, demand for luxury items will be led by those under 35 who are either single or married with no children, according to the credit card company's forecast.

In the rest of the region it will be those who are over 60, either retired or still working, driving demand as they have accumulated wealth and have time to spend and travel, the company said.

In Australia, the average age of an owner of a Harley Davidson motorcycle was 55 in 2005, while in Japan women over the age of 55 are the most active in Internet travel bookings after the under-25s.

Japanese have the longest life expectancy in the world, followed by Hong Kongers, and older Asian consumers are living increasingly active lives.

However, since they tend to live in small apartments in cities like Tokyo and Hong Kong, they will tend to spend more on luxury services like travel rather than goods, MasterCard said.

Demand in Japan for luxury goods and services among older premium consumers—or the top third of wealthy retired households—may more than double to $67.8 billion by 2016, from $27 billion in 2006, MasterCard estimates.

In China and India, luxury demand is being spurred by young, urban professionals whose incomes are rising fast.

They are keener on buying goods than services.

MasterCard sees demand in China for luxury goods and services among young premium consumers—the top third of income earners aged under 35 with no children—rising to $26.4 billion by 2016 from $10.4 billion last year.

That would still lag Japan's young premium market, which is expected to total $35.2 billion by 2016.

India would be Asia's third biggest market, although much smaller, with demand from young premium consumers more than doubling in the next decade to $6.6 billion by 2016, according to MasterCard. *Reuters*

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Republic of the Philippines
City of Cebu
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cebu City Government, thru its BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC), invites all interested manufacturers, suppliers, dealers and/or distributors to apply for eligibility and to submit BIDS for the SUPPLY of various items as follows:

ITEM NO.	Name of Project	Location	Brief Description	Approved Budget Contract	PR #	Fee of Bid Documents
1	500 Amps Atropine Sulfate and other items	CCMC	for patients treated/ admitted in CCMC	4,146,000.00	747.07	.002 of ABC

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conferences, Evaluation of bids, Post-qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation - A (IRR-A).

The schedule of activities is as follows:

ACTIVITIES	Schedule Item	
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	September 6-14, 2007	
2. Pre-Bid Conference	September 6, 2007	
3. Submission & Opening of Bid Docs	September 18, 2007	
4. Evaluation of Bid Documents	September 19-21, 2007	
5. Post Evaluation	September 24-27, 2007	
6. Notice of Award	September 28, 2007	

Bid documents will be available only to eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount as reflected under "Fee of Bid Documents" above to the Cebu City Treasurer's Office Cashier.

The Cebu City Government assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidder's for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

For more information please contact the BAC Secretariat at telephone numbers 253-2484 and 412-0000, local 806.

These requirements are posted at the GSO Bulletin Board, Bid Bulletin (Legislative Building), in-front of Cebu City Hall Main Building Bulletin Board, Capitol Building Bulletin Board and Cebu City Website.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the City of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO L. FERNANDEZ
Chairman

(PDI - Sept. 5, 2007)

INQUIRER

Dare to ask. Be an Inquirer.

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID ACQUISITION OF DESKTOP COMPUTERS

1. The Commission on Audit intends to apply the sum of One Million Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P1,500,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the Acquisition of Thirty (30) sets Desktop Computers, with the following specifications:

Computer with Combo Drive DVD/CD-RW (branded)	
Type	– Branded
Casing	– Desktop or Minitower
Processor	– Core 2 Duo 1.86 CHz
Front Side Bus	– 800 MHz
Cache	– 512 KB Integrated L2
Memory	– 1 GB, 400 MHz
Hard Disk Drive	– 80 GB 7200 rpm
Floppy Disk Drive	– 1.44 MB; 3.5 inch
Optical Drive	– Combo Drive DVD/CD-RW
Interfaces	– USB; Parallel; PS/2 Keyboard; PS/2 Mouse; RJ-45; Video; Audio
Audio	– Integrated Audio
Network Interface Controller	– Integrated 10/100 Mbps Ethernet
Display	– CRT 15" color monitor
Video Memory	– 32 MB shared memory
Keyboard	– PS/2 or USB keyboard
Mouse	– PS/2 or USB 2-button scroll mouse
Operating System	– Windows Vista Business
Warranty	– three (3) years on all parts
	– three (3) years on services
	– three (3) years on-site
Others	– Bundled with Microsoft Office 2007 OEM with CD installer
	– Surge protector, cover, manual, latest Antivirus Software (with one year subscription), Recovery CD with installation for Vista

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the Bid opening.

2. Interested Bidders may obtain a complete set of Bidding Documents starting September 4, 2007 to September 21, 2007, upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) from the BAC Secretariat, c/o Director Mila R. Peñas, Procurement Division, COA Central Office, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.
3. The Commission on Audit will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on September 10, 2007, 2:00 pm at the BAC Office, Room 102, Ground Floor, Former SAADO Building, COA Complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.
4. Deadline for the submission of Bids shall be on September 24, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at BAC Office, Room 102, Ground Floor former SAADO Building, COA Complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City. Immediately after the deadline, bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
5. The Bids and Awards Committee of the Commission on Audit reserves the right to reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **ARCADIO B. CUENCO, JR.**
Assistant Commissioner
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – September 5, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
Acquisition of Dental Chairs and Periapical X-ray Machine

1. The Commission on Audit intends to apply the sum of One Million Three Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Pesos (P1,375,360.00) broken down as follows:

ITEM NO.	QUANTITY	EQUIPMENT	SUB-ABC
1	2 sets	Dental Chairs	P 1,184,960.00
2	1 unit	Periapical X-ray Machine	190,400.00
TOTAL ABC			P 1,375,360.00

being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the Acquisition of two (2) sets Dental Chairs and one (1) unit Periapical X-ray Machine. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the Bid opening.

2. Interested Bidders may obtain a complete set of Bidding Documents starting September 7, 2007 to September 26, 2007, upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) from the BAC Secretariat, c/o Director Mila R. Peñas, Procurement Division, COA Central Office, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.
3. The Commission on Audit will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on September 14, 2007, 2:00 pm at the BAC Office, Room 102, Ground Floor, Former SAADO Building, COA Complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.
4. Deadline for the submission of Bids shall be on September 27, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at the BAC Office, Room 102, Ground Floor former SAADO Building, COA Complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City Immediately after the deadline, bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
5. The Bids and Awards Committee of the Commission on Audit reserves the right to reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **ARCADIO B. CUENCO, JR.**
Assistant Commissioner
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – September 5, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
CEBU PORT AUTHORITY
CIP Complex, Serging Osmeña Boulevard, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City
E-mail cpa@cpa.gov.ph
Telephone 232-1461 to 63; 231-6856 to 57
Fax No. 231-6848

AN INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cebu Port Authority (CPA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Supply and Installation of One (1) Unit X-ray Machine and Five (5) Units Walk-Through Metal Detectors.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC):

1 Unit X-ray Machine	PHP 3,500,000.00	PHP 3.5M
5 Units Walk Through Metal Detectors	PHP 400,000.00	PHP 2.0M
Total		PHP 5.50M

Bidding Documents may be purchased from the BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of TWO THOUSAND PESOS (P2,000.00) starting **06 September to 12 September 2007.**

Interested bidders shall have an authorized service center located within Metro Cebu, Philippines with complete spare parts, equipment and qualified factory-trained technicians.

Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **19 September 2007**, 2:00 p.m. at the CPA Conference Room.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on or before 9:00 a.m. on **02 October 2007** at the CPA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, CIP Complex, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City. Each bid must be accompanied by a bid security. **(Late bids shall not be accepted.)**

The Cebu Port Authority (CPA) reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, or to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) **MARIO G. TAN**
BAC Chairman

Noted by:

(Sgd.) **ANGELO C. VERDAN**
General Manager

(PDI - Sept. 5, 2007)

ISABELA I ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Victoria, Alicia, Isabela
Tel. No. (078) 6627103/6627983/6627810
Fax No. (078) 6627103/6627917

The Isabela I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ISELCO I) wishes to invite interested suppliers for Public Bidding for the Supply/Delivery and Rewind/Repair of the following:

	PARTICULARS	QUANTITY
a)	Automatic Voltage Regulator, AVR Control Panel Model: IJ 2A (SIEMENS-ALLIS) Brand new	3 units
b)	Service Drop Wire, Duplex #6 ACSR, 6/1 Local Brands	50,000 meters
c)	Socket Base, Ring Type, 100 Amp, Two 1" hub, 4 jaws	1,000 pcs.
d)	Rewind/Repair & Commissioning of 400 kVA, three phase, 460 Volt generator Weight: 3 tons Note for item d: Site Inspection at Mini-Hydro, Villa Beltran, Ramon	1 unit
e)	Line Fuselink, Universal Button Head Type K, 2-4-6-8-10-12-15-20-25-30 Amp. Brand: HUBBEL - A B CHANCE, S & C	200 pcs. each
f)	Transformer Oil Brand: HIRAX	20 drums
g)	Transformer, Pole Type, Conventional 25 kVA	5 units
h)	Transformer, Pole Type, Conventional 37.5 kVA	5 units
i)	Transformer, Poly Type, Conventional 50 kVA	5 units
j)	Transformer, Pole Type, Conventional, 75 kVA Specification for item g to j: Conventional Distribution Transformer (Brand New) Copper (Primary) to Copper (Secondary), Silicon, Steel Core with Tap Changer, Insulation Class A, Primary Voltage 7.620/13.2 Y KV, Brand: WAGNER	5 units
k)	Insulator Pin Type (Double Groove) 55-5	400 pcs.
l)	Cut-out with Arrester Combination Brand new Brand: HUBBEL - A B CHANCE	50 sets
m)	3 Bolt Clamp Guy HD	200 pcs.
n)	Eye Nut 5/8	300 pcs.
o)	Swinging Clevis Service	250 pcs.
p)	Shackle Anchor	200 pcs.
q)	Spool Insulator 1 ¾	250 pcs.
r)	Clamp Loop Deadend	250 pcs.
s)	Eye Bolt Oval 5/8x8	200 pcs.
t)	Conductor Bare Wire #2 ACSR (Local Brands)	10,000 mtrs.
u)	Insulated Wire #2 (Local Brands)	5,000 mtrs.
v)	Copper Wire 5 mm	500 mtrs.
w)	Connector Compression YHO 100	200 pcs.
x)	Connector Compression YHO 150	200 pcs.
y)	Connector Compression YHO 200	200 pcs.
z)	Hot Line Clamp	200 pcs.
aa)	Oil Purification & Degasification of 5MVA Substation Power Transformer at Reina Mercedes, Isabela Note for item cc: Contractor shall provide their own generator for three-phase electricity supply	

Interested parties may secure bid documents and checklist of qualification requirements at the office of the PBAC Secretary at the Finance Manager's Office and look for Ms. Leah Garcia or call Tel. No. (078) 6627917 or call Engr. Romeo M. Villacampa at Cel. No. 09189226973.

The schedules of bidding activities are as follows:

PARTICULARS	DATE/TIME
Issuance of bid documents/checklist of qualification requirements	September 07 - September 20, 2007 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Pre-Qualification Conference	September 21, 2007 / 9:00 AM
Submission / Opening of Bids	September 21, 2007 / 1:00 PM

Checklist of Qualification Requirements are the following: (to be submitted during the pre-qualification conference)

1) Non-refundable filing fee in the amount of Three Thousand Pesos Only (P3,000.00) in the form of cash.
2) Complete set of legal documents of the company, SEC Registration, Articles of Incorporation and by-laws, company profile, business registration and license papers.
3) Audited Financial Statement (Balance Sheet and Income Statement) duly filed/stamped received by BIR.
4) If represented by an agent of the firm, it must have a letter of Authorization from the President/Manager or Owner.
5) A Bid Bond amounting to 10% of the total amount of material and service requirements

The ISELCO I reserves the right to reject any or all bids for valid and justified reason, waive any defect thereon and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the cooperative (ISELCO I). ISELCO I likewise assume no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **Mr. Orlando B. Ramil**
PBAC Chairman

(PDI--Sept. 5, 6 & 7, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
Securities and Exchange Commission
SEC Bldg. EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

CORPORATON FINANCE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF
I-REMIT, INC. :
REGISTRANT : REGISTRATION OF SECURITIES
x----------------------x

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that on 10 August 2007, a sworn Registration Statement was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission for and on behalf of **I-Remit, Inc.** (the "Company") for the registration of a maximum of **Five Hundred Sixty-Two Million Four Hundred Seventeen Thousand (P562,417,000) of the Company's Common Shares** of which, up to **One Hundred Forty Million Six Hundred Four Thousand (140,604,000).** Common Shares will be sold in an initial Public Offering, consisting of up to **One Hundred Seven Million Four Hundred Seventeen Thousand (107,417,000) New Unclassified Common Shares** to be issued on a Primary Basis and up to **Thirty-Three Million One Hundred Eighty-Seven Thousand (33,187,000) Common Shares** to be sold on a Secondary Basis, at an Offer Price of between P4.00 to P5.77.

According to the papers presented, the following are the directors/officers of the Corporation:

Name	Position
Bansan C. Choa	Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer
Harris Edsel D. Jacildo	President and Chief Operating Officer
Adolfo S. Suzara	Independent Director and Chairman of the Exec. Com.
Gregorio T. Yu	Independent Director
Calixtro V. Chikiamco	Independent Director
Gilbert C. Gaw	Director
Jose Joel Y. Pusta	Director
A. Bayani K. Tan	Director
Ben C. Tiu	Director
Ruben C. Tiu	Director
John Y. Tiu, Jr.	Director
Ismael S. Reyes	Senior Vice President and Head, Market Management
Elizabeth G. Yao	Senior Vice President and Head, Service & Operations
Bernadette Cindy C. Tiu	First Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Ronald C. Santos	Vice President and Head, International Treasury
Alma C. Santiago	Corporate Secretary
Michelle B. San Buenaventura	Asst. Corporate Secretary

Said Registration Statement and other papers/documents attached thereto are open for inspection by interested parties during business hours, and copies thereof, photostatic or otherwise, shall be furnished to every party at such reasonable fees as the Commission may prescribe.

(Sgd.) **JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN**
Director

(PDI - Sept. 5, 2007)

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **TELEWIDE SERVICE PROVIDER CORP.** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New IT Export Service Firm in the Field of Operation of a Call Center** on a **Non-Pioneer** Status with project/plant site located at **1802 Corporate 88 Centre, 141 Sedeno Street, Makati City.**

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI--Sept. 5, 2007)

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ERRATUM

In the advertisement of Second Agrarian Reform Communities Project (ARCDPII), Municipality of Antequera, Bohol, published in this paper on August 27, 2007, the MPDO and ARCDPII-LGU-BAC CHAIRMAN should be **ENGR. IRMA B. SANCHEZ** and **not** ENGR. ERASMO G. DIEZ.

Our apologies.

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OBITUARIES

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MOMMY

Flora Kangleon San Gabriel

Has been called by the Heavenly Father on **September 02, 2007** and serenely united with her beloved parents, **Ruperto Kangleon (†)** and **Valentina (†)**, and brother **Juanito (Loloy) (†)**.

While she may be gone - for us - she has never left. For albeit God has her in heaven, we however, hold her always lovingly in our hearts.

May she find comfort in the thought that the Lord Almighty, who calls all our dear ones home, and bequeaths them happiness and rest-indeed knows best.

We, her adoring husband **Reynaldo San Gabriel**; children **Evelyn** & **Roberto Garcia, Menchu** & **Romeo Buenaflor, Gerardo** & **Jeanette Aliviado, Ayie** & **Alfred Go, Raphael** & **Peps Regalado, Ludy** & **Robert Amaral, Melinda** & **Harold Ochoco**, and **Ruperto** & **Cecile Edaño**; and her beloved grandchildren; **Bambam, Edward, Rica** & **Wendel So, Jonky, Nina, Bobby, Bird, Chloe, Carlo, Edrick, Abigail, Chinkki, Chyna, Krissie, Harrison, Pamela** and **Bea**; brothers, sisters, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose and tranquil dignity of her soul.

Her temporal remains lie in state at the Sanctuarium (Chapel Gladiolus), 739 G. Araneta Ave., cor. Agno St., Brgy. Tatalon, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 8, 2007 at Loyola Memorial Park-Marikina after the 9:00 a.m. Funeral Mass at the Sanctuarium.

Text us your feedback: inquirer mtr name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

E-mail: pr_motoring@inquirer.com.ph

Coty comparo fests rev up anew

30 motoring journalists put 97 new vehicles in the Philippines to the test to make the Pinoy more empowered buyers

By Tessa R. Salazar

CHOICES, CHOICES, Choices. For motorists who already own cars that won in past Car of the Year (Coty) Philippines' awards, the award is an affirmation that an informed choice had been made, and nothing had been left to chance.

For those about to buy a car—it would, indeed, be wise to follow the ongoing Car of the Year test fests closely. Coty picks could be considered the last word in industry evaluations.

Likened to an election

Car of the Year Philippines, this time called The Petron 2007 Car of the Year Philippines Awards, held in cooperation with the Automobile Association Philippines, can be likened to an election in which each motoring journalist is tasked to vote based on the riding and driving experiences of almost all types of cars introduced within the period given.

The Coty test fests are unique in the country. No other industry-wide evaluation program gathers this many motoring journalists and media personalities and for an exhaustive and comprehensive group test-drive system of the Cagi's (Car Awards Group Inc.) Coty.

The variety of cars involved—from the basic people carriers to ultra luxury status statement cars—is as wide as the motoring journos testing them.

Member-journalists

No wonder, then, that Coty member-journalists believe the test fest is representative of the public's preferences. The members are everyday motorists as well, who happen to be motoring magazine and broadsheet writers, columnists, broadcast media and Web-based writers. They hail from different social backgrounds who are well aware of the needs and wants of their own reading public.

At the Coty test fests, these journalists get their fill of almost all the cars introduced for the particular awards period. There are the budget, executive, luxury and ultra luxury vehicles.

Revised evaluation sheets

The revised Coty evaluation sheets to be filled up by each member during

COTY/B9

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Riding school to open next month

Text and photo by Charles E. Buban

WE DON'T HAVE TO LOOK at the numbers, TV and newspaper reports are convincing enough to tell us that motorcycle-related accidents are becoming quite common these days.

This is no longer surprising as more Filipinos fall in love with these fuel-efficient, relatively inexpensive machines—three million at the last count.

"Add to the fact that they are quite easy to operate, a lot of people thought going to a riding school is no longer needed. On the contrary, if they allow themselves to be taught the correct riding know-how, techniques and even proper motorcycle maintenance, this will contribute a lot in minimizing accidents that cost lives, injuries and significant damage to property," said Kazuhiko Ikezoe, president and GM of Honda Philippines Inc.

Ikezoe was recently appointed president of Honda Safety Driving Center (HSDC), a newly formed nonstock, nonprofit company that aims to promote road safety and rider or driver education.

2.4 hectare property

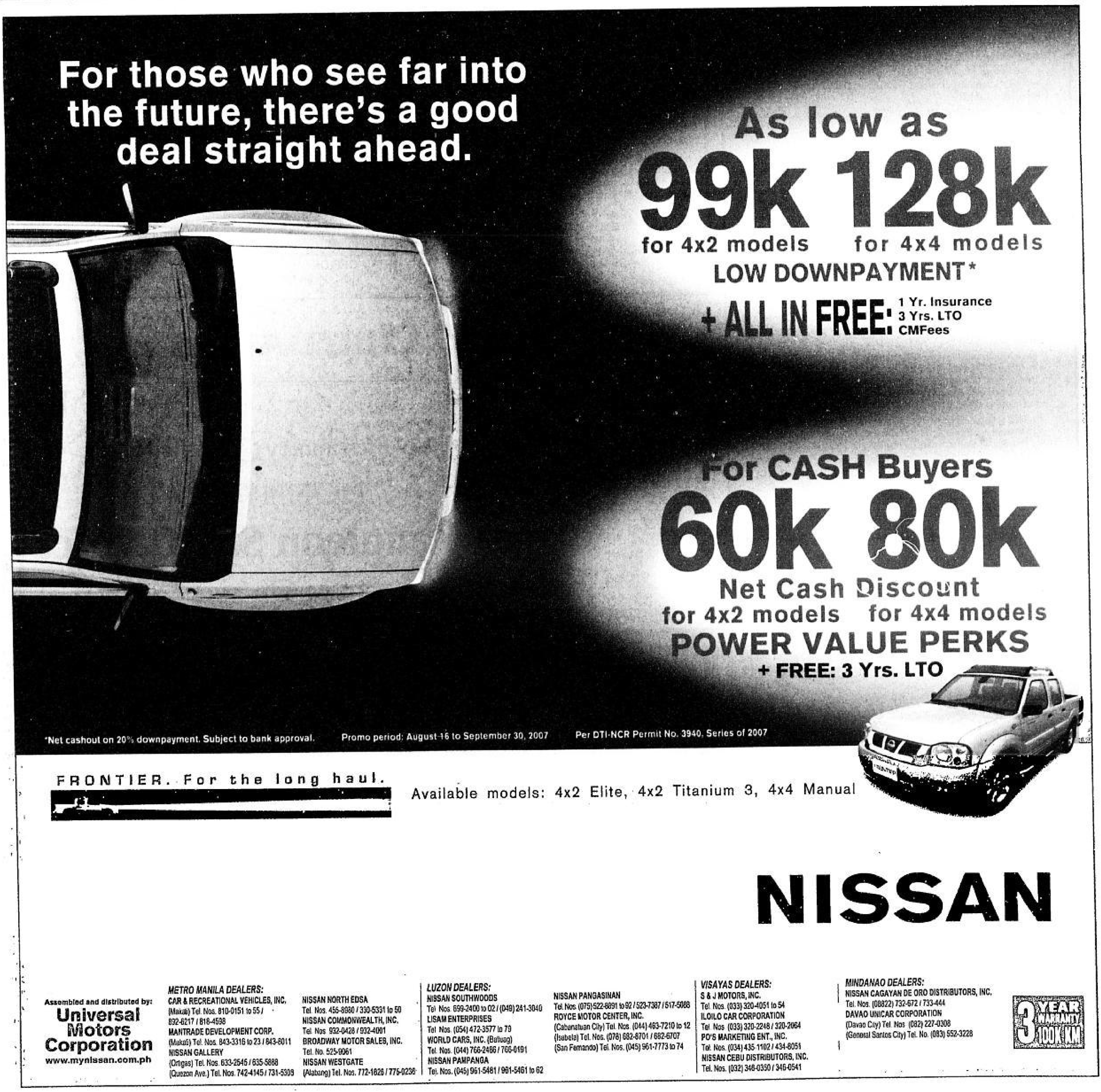
Scheduled to be finished next month, the HSDC will rise on a 2.4-hectare property located on Km 17 East Service Road, South Super Highway, Parañaque City, Honda Philippines' old motorcycle driving school.

Its three incorporators—Honda Philippines, Asian Honda Motor Co. Ltd. and Honda Cars Philippines Inc.—have earmarked P170 million to make the center one of the state-of-the-art riding/driving schools in the world and largest in the Philippines.

The HSDC is the latest addition to the 43 traffic education centers and driving safety facilities that Honda operates in 22 other countries around the world.

"We believe that our commitment must not end with just manufacturing high-quality and technologically advanced motorcycles and vehicles. We could contribute a lot in advancing safety education here in the country," said Takashi Sekiguchi, HSDC trustee and president and Honda Cars Philippines GM who added that

RIDING/B9



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3 YEAR WARRANTY 100K KM

The everyday BMW

BMW 120i

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

THE IDEA OF AN EVERYDAY BMW IS a concept that even I have trouble with. A quick glance at the lineup points to entry-level products that help show first-time customers what the brand is all about. But cheapest in this case is never the best. Synonymous with these cars from Munich are image and performance, factors that increase exponentially with engine size and, inescapably, with price.

If you are going to spend a hefty sum of money to put one in your garage, the ideal would be to get the model with the most value, the best bang for your hard-earned buck. This is where it gets tricky.

Price of admission

The 1-Series is the minimum price of admission into the world of BMW, but the full experience starts at the 120i. Smaller engines just don't match up with the able chassis and valuewise the smallish two-liter five-door is just priced too close to the equivalent 3-Series. This relatively small gulf in price comes into play even more when one realizes that the 1-Series is challenged for true, useful everyday space.

So the task of meeting public demand for the everyday BMW falls squarely on the lap of the 3-Series range. Practical enough for a family of three plus luggage, this is a car with particular variants that really deliver impeccable image and true, road-going performance.

Four door fun starts at the 150 bhp 320i and culminates in the 335i with 300 bhp and 400 Nm of torque, care of BMW's first twin-turbo engine. Either of these two cars have their limitations when it comes to the everyday BMW argument. Where the two-liter gas falls short of truly remarkable performance, the 335i has but a single shortcoming: price.

There is but a single model that balances value and smile-inducing, tarmac-gobbling satisfaction while delivering the day-to-day versatility of a four-door family sedan. The Zen-like balance we seek in the search for the everyday BMW can be found in the 320d.

Quite impressive

Just on paper, the engine numbers of the 320d are already quite impressive. Horsepower is decent at over 160 bhp but the available torque is what makes this car shine. At just over 2,000 rpm, 400 Nm of grunt welcomes drivers with acceleration g-forces that make even the most jaded of critics break into uncontrollable giggling spells. Add to this the fact that you're looking at an engine that runs on diesel, a fuel that per liter is still cheaper than gasoline.

Some will argue that hearing the distinct, industrial, public utility rumble of a diesel engine is a turnoff, especially in a car as pricey and image aware as a BMW. I say we turn that argument on its head. The 320d is one of those cars that help make diesel sexier in the Filipino motoring consciousness.

Even if you are not a fan of the styling or the brand for that matter, the ability of this car to propel itself forward is something everyone will understand. And it is only because this car is diesel-powered, with common rail direct injection and a turbo, that such performance is possible at this price point.

Performance experience

The rest of the 320d package is what we've become accustomed to when it comes to a BMW. Aiding the engine in delivering a complete performance experience is the sharp E90 chassis. Lighter, stiffer and well balanced, the design delivers a drive that rewards those who push a little more than most when they drive. This is tempered by very active stability and traction control for the rest of the market that would like to keep their driving excitement down to a minimum.

Downsides are relatively few. Ride quality is definitely on the stiff side, owing much to the choice of run flat tires. The cabin is bare by market standards in this price range but nonetheless plush despite the simplicity.

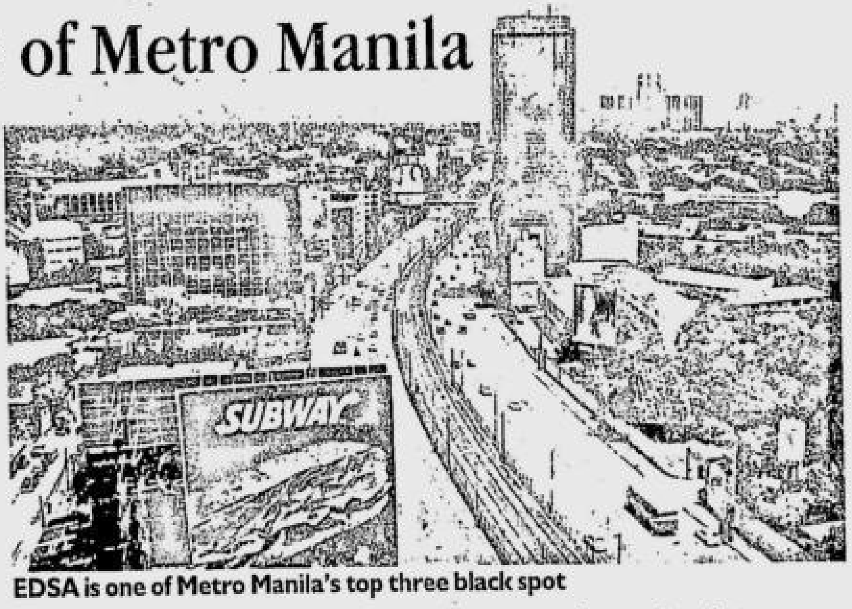
The 320d is the first 3-Series that comes to mind when attempting to rationalize putting a BMW in my own garage. Being part of the luxury market segment obviously translates to a steep sticker price.

Trouble is the higher the price of a vehicle, customer expectations often begin to border on the unreasonable. In all honesty, customers just don't get what they pay for in the BMW 320d: They get more.

The black spots of Metro Manila

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza


EDSA is one of Metro Manila's top three black spot

IN ROAD SAFETY JARGON, A "black spot" is a road or a portion thereof where traffic accidents have frequently occurred. A black spot is more popularly known as an "accident-prone area." If you drive in Metro Manila, you occasionally see road signs warning motorists: "Accident-prone area. Drive carefully."

In Metro Manila, where a total of 60,939 accidents took place in 2006, the top three black spots are Edsa, Commonwealth Avenue and the C-5 highway.

According to the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Accident Reporting and Analysis System 2006, the other black spots are: 1) Rizal Avenue corner 7th Avenue in Caloocan City, 2) C-3 Road corner North Bay Boulevard in Navotas; 3) E. Rodriguez Avenue corner Aquilina in Marikina City; 4) Shaw Boulevard corner Nueve de Pebrero in Mandaluyong City; 5) Rodriguez Lanuza corner Julia Vargas Avenue in Pasig City; 6) Ortigas Avenue corner Wilson in San Juan; 7) President Osmeña (a.k.a. South Superhighway) corner San Andres in Manila.

Most dangerous

Among the cities and towns that comprise Metro Manila, the most dangerous for motorists or the places that had the highest volume of traffic accidents are Quezon City with 28.37 percent or 17,292 accidents in 2006, followed by Makati City with 11.97 percent or 7,298 accidents. On the other hand, the towns with the lowest number of traffic accidents are Pateros with 130 and Navotas with 282 accidents.

It would be logical to assume that Pateros and Navotas have less traffic accidents because of a lower number of black spots and/or a lower traffic volume compared to Quezon City and Makati City. Whatever the reason, something has to be done to eliminate or at least reduce the black spots of Metro Manila. In other words, make Metro Manila's roads safe.

Systematic action has to be taken on all three components of a safe road system—the driver, the vehicle and the road. Even if a massive driver education program were to instill safe driving habits among all motorists and even if car manufacturers were to equip all motor vehicles with advanced safety technologies, the number of traffic accidents would still rise if a commensurate effort to make roads safe is not taken.

Progress

As pointed out by iRAP (International Road Assessment Program), which is supported by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, in developed countries where great progress has already been made on driver behavior and vehicle safety, investment in making roads safer is expected to deliver twice the casualty reduction provided by investment in making drivers and vehicles safer.

iRAP describes safe roads as self-explaining and forgiving roads. Crashes are less likely to occur on self-explaining roads and injuries are less severe on forgiving roads.

Self-explaining roads show all road users—pedestrians and bicyclists as well as motorists—where they should be and what they should do to keep safe. Clear road layouts not only explain where road users are expected to be, but also take into account the road user's ability to process information and make decisions.

Refuge

Example: a cheap, simple pedestrian refuge island not only shows where to cross but makes safe crossing much easier. The pedestrian has to check only one stream of oncoming traffic at a time. The refuge island also slows down drivers and restricts overtaking at the crossing point.

Forgiving roads are designed to protect road users in the event of a crash, iRAP says. Soft engineering features such as safety fences separate fast-moving traffic from people and cushion crashes when they occur. Note that simple, affordable infrastructure such as footpaths, paint and fencing save lives.

Here's how self-explaining and forgiving roads look like: 1) Lane markings and signs show road users how they are expected to behave; 2) Roadsides are clear of hazardous fixed objects and trees, or the road user is protected from them by a crash barrier; 3) Intersections manage crash energy. Crashes at roundabouts tend to involve glancing blows rather than brutal side impacts at crossroads and T-junctions; 4) Traffic traveling at high speeds in opposite directions are separated by a safety barrier to avert head-on collisions; 5) Traffic is slowed down or excluded from areas where there is pedestrian activity; Paths are provided for pedestrians and bicyclists so that they don't mix with motorized traffic; and Crossing facilities show pedestrians where to cross and make it easier to cross safely.

Few

Looks like few of Metro Manila's roads fit the above description. In any case, the black spots identified by the MMDA are certainly not the only roads posing a high risk to motorists and pedestrians alike. So road user, be more aware.

6 AIRBAGS, NOT 2. Contrary to the Buyer's Guide specs in the August '07 C! Magazine (which this column unfortunately repeated), the 2007 Mitsubishi Eclipse has six airbags, not only two. My apologies to Mitsubishi Motors and here's hoping that C!, the country's leading car 'zine, cleans up the errors in its Buyer's Guide.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: History does not repeat itself, historians merely repeat each other.

Car cleanups and emergencies

SO YOU'VE FINALLY GOTTEN YOUR DREAM car... and you're simply crazy about it as most people are. How do you keep it in dream condition even as it goes down the road?

Here are some tips on car clean-ups, emergencies and the coolest gadgets from the Hardware Workshop stores.

STEERING wheel

- **Clean-ups.** Advanced cleaning products can gently and safely lift dirt and grime without using any harsh chemicals that will not only strip off the paint finish of your car but are also harmful to the environment. Waxes and polishes contain many mild abrasives that leave behind a high gloss shine. Inside your car, seat covers, dashboards, mirrors and carpets all have cleaning products, as do wheels and tires.
- **Basic tools/emergency kits.** Every car owner should have his or her own set of tools for fix its and emergencies. When selecting tools, choose those with insulated grips (rubber or plastic covered) for extra protection. Keep your tools in a box where they can stay dry, and clean off grease, dirt and especially water after using them.
- **Comfort zones.** Drive with ease with interior accessories that make traveling less stressful. Seat cushions for the back and neck are ideal for driving in the city and family road trips. The cushion is unbelievably comfortable, allowing you to sit for long periods of time without pressure or pain.
- **Mobile entertainment.** Advanced audio and video mobile systems take your entertainment experience on the road to a new level. These include DVD audio/video systems, CD players, satellite radios, amplifiers, speakers and other products that bring the multimedia experience you desire.

Antifingerprint technology and unique touch screen capabilities offer swift access to functions, while adjustable viewing angles let you enjoy color clarity and image sharpness regardless of the viewing angle. Just connect for cinematic excitement and a total visual experience.

Hardware Workshop stores are located at SM Harrison and SM Department Stores at the SM Supermalls in North Edsa, Sta. Mesa, Manila, Quiapo, San Lazaro, Bicutan, Sucat and the Mall of Asia. In the provinces, these are located at SM City Batangas, SM City Clark, SM City Dasmariñas, Lucena and Sta. Rosa.

Riding school to open. . .

From page B8

the center will be open to any individual or any group regardless of what motorcycle brand they use or have bought.

Encourage more Filipinos

With this center, the incorporators expect more Filipinos to strictly obey traffic rules and road safety precautions and finally do something about the rising number of accidents involving motorcycles.

TO ADDRESS the rising rate of motorcycle-related accidents, HSDC incorporators believe it will take more than just wearing helmet or wearing riding gear, education is also vital.

In Metro Manila alone, motorcycle accidents average more than 80 fatalities annually.

Sekiguchi said the center will greatly benefit motorcycle riders belonging to low- and medium-income families who use their motorcycles as a family vehicle and those more affluent ones (mostly teenagers) who buy expensive models to show off to their friends since they are those who usually figure in accidents.

While he cited factors such as speeding, not wearing a helmet (or wearing them but not using the chin strap), risk-taking behavior and drunk-driving as reasons to the rising rate of accidents, Ikezoe believes behavioral change is more important.

The HSDC has lined up several programs including basic safety riding, student-learners course for automobiles, advanced courses for both motorcycle and cars as well as fleet safety driving programs—contents of which can be tailor-fitted to every fleet client's requirements.

The center has yet to announce the price of each course but promises they will be quite affordable.

No ordinary training school

But, HSDC is no ordinary training school as it will offer state-of-the-art facilities as well as road courses that will involve both motorcycle riders and car drivers.

A unique feature of the center is the "Low Friction Braking Course" where learners can acquire the correct handling of their motorcycles or cars under various slippery road conditions.

"The HSDC becomes the first in Asia outside Japan to offer this facility," informed Arnel Doria, HSDC GM who is also VP for marketing of Honda Cars Philippines.

Aside from this, the HSDC will offer motorcycle rider-trainees other facilities such as the figure 8, crank, narrow plank and bumpy path, which are all essential in developing the rider's skills in balancing, cornering and braking.

"A motorcycle dirt track is also included to teach riders how to properly and safely negotiate in unpaved terrain or debris-filled roads commonly found in the Philippines," added Doria.

For car drivers

For car drivers, the school will offer courses on how to negotiate S roads, crank, change direction, and parking, all of which aims to hone driver skills in basic vehicle operations under the safest environment possible.

To prepare learners for actual road situations, traffic channels like the yellow box, round-about, slopes and lane merging are likewise integrated in the center's facilities.

"Both motorcycle riders and automobile drivers will have a chance to interact so both will know how they should behave on the road," Doria said.

At any given time, the center could accommodate up to 75 motorcycles and 40 cars, giving the HSDC an annual rated training capacity of 11,800 riders and 8,600 drivers.

The center will employ a total of 70 Filipino instructors who aside from their years of riding and driving experience also took a three-month additional training in Singapore.

Coty comparo fests. . .

From page B8

the eight-week tests at Canyon Ranch Carmona, Cavite are based on various requirements and sensitivities.

For budget-priced vehicles, more weight has been given to the price and the look over the performance. In the luxury and the ultra luxury categories, more weight has been given to performance, features and looks over price.

The Petron 2007 Car of the Year-Philippines Awards is made possible with the help of the Automobile Association Philippines, The Manila International Auto Show, Rockwell Land Corp., Bosch, Bridgestone, San Lazaro Leisure Park, Standard Insurance and San Miguel Corp. It is also supported by the Makati Skyline, Jollibee, Segafredo Zanetti, Concept One and Speedlab.

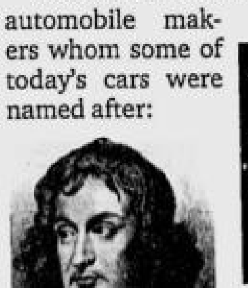
Logistics assistance is also being provided for by the Applied Leisure and Sales Operations Group.

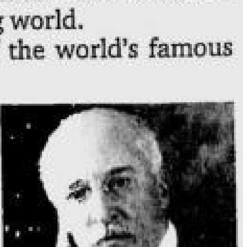
TRANSPORT TRIVIA

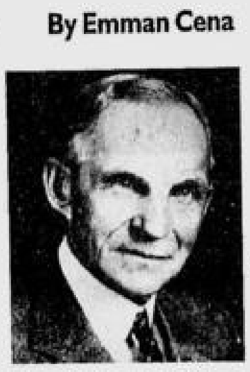
By Emman Cena

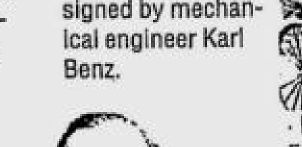
WHILE THE HEATED DEBATE ON WHO really invented the first automobile has not been put to a close, let us take some time off and highlight the people who made history with their own contributions to the motoring world.

Here are some of the world's famous automobile makers whom some of today's cars were named after:


· America's first gasoline-powered automobile was the 1891 Lambert car invented by John W. Lambert.

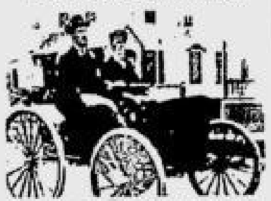

· The diesel-fueled internal combustion engine was invented by Rudolf Diesel while Charles Franklin Kettering invented the first automobile electrical ignition system and the first practical engine-driven generator.


· Henry Ford invented a transmission mechanism and popularized the gas-powered automobile. He also improved the assembly line for automobile manufacturing (Model-T).


· In 1876, Nicolaus August Otto invented the gas motor engine.

· 1885 saw the completion of the world's first practical automobile powered by an internal combustion engine and designed by mechanical engineer Karl Benz.

· In 1885, Gottlieb Daimler invented a gas engine that revolutionized car design.


· Duryea Brothers, Frank and Charles Duryea, founded America's first company to manufacture and sell gasoline-powered vehicles.

SOURCE: HTTP://INVENTORS.ABOUT.COM

T-bond yield up to 8.59%

Investors still worried over US credit woes

By Michelle V. Remo

THE YIELD ON THE GOVERNMENT'S 20-year treasury bonds went up slightly yesterday, evidence that investors were still spooked by credit defaults in the US sub-prime market.

The yield on the 20-year bonds hit 8.599 percent, up 59.9 basis points from the 8 percent recorded during the last auction in December last year.

Analysts said widespread credit defaults by US borrowers with spotty credit histories had led to some risk aversion toward investments in emerging economies like the Philippines, because both sectors have the same credit rating.

Investors' fears were partly eased last week, however, when President Bush announced measures to avert a full-scale mortgage crisis.

The Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee accepted P5.925 billion worth of bids, short of the government's original target of P7 billion.

Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan said after the auction yesterday that the government did not raise the entire P7 billion because of the high bids.

Had the auction committee raised the full P7 billion, the yield on the 20-year bonds would have reached 8.75 percent.

"We don't need cash for now and so we can live with it (lower-than-programmed revenue raised from yesterday's auction)," Tan said.

There was considerable appetite for the 20-year bonds, with tenders reaching P13.347 billion.

Besides the volatile financial market, the higher yield on government securities was also attributed to competing investments.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas opened last May a facility under which trust department of banks may directly deposit funds to the BSP at yields higher than those on government securities.

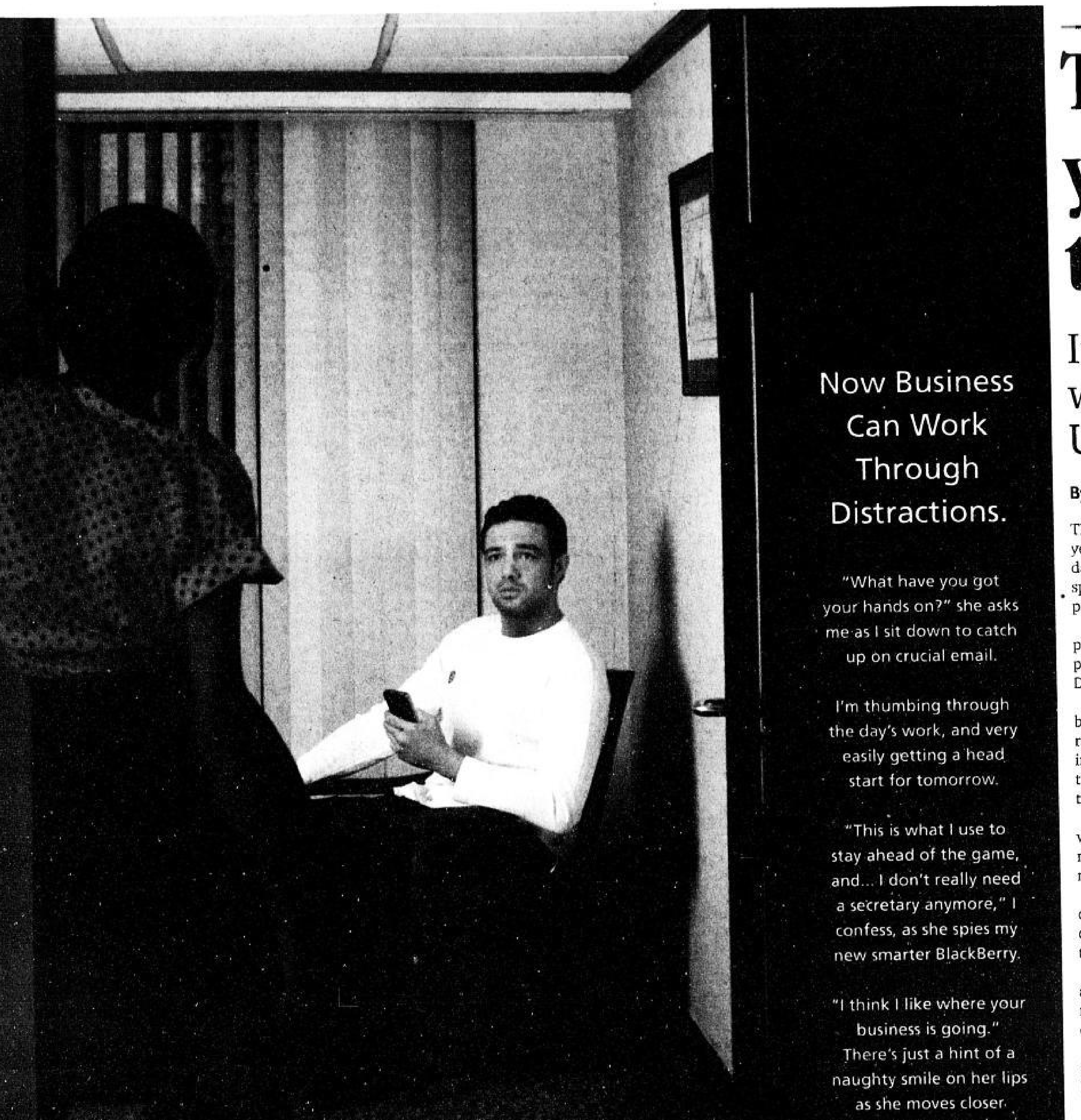
This encouraged government-owned and -corporations to deposit more of their funds to the central bank.

Rates on government securities, however, have been rising since the second quarter of the year after posting historic lows last year.

Anemic tax collection in the first half was also blamed for the rise in interest rates, as this raised concerns over the government's ability to reduce its budget deficit this year.

But the Department of Finance earlier reported that the government's revenue collection partially recovered in July with both the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs hitting their collection targets.

The government has set a goal of trimming the deficit to P63 billion this year from last year's P64.8 billion, and balancing its budget by next year.



Now Business Can Work Through Distractions.

"What have you got your hands on?" she asks me as I sit down to catch up on crucial email.

I'm thumbing through the day's work, and very easily getting a head start for tomorrow.

"This is what I use to stay ahead of the game, and... I don't really need a secretary anymore," I confess, as she spies my new smarter BlackBerry.

"I think I like where your business is going." There's just a hint of a naughty smile on her lips as she moves closer for a look.

The Smarter BlackBerry.
You *really* wanna know me.

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SMART Office In My Pocket Solutions

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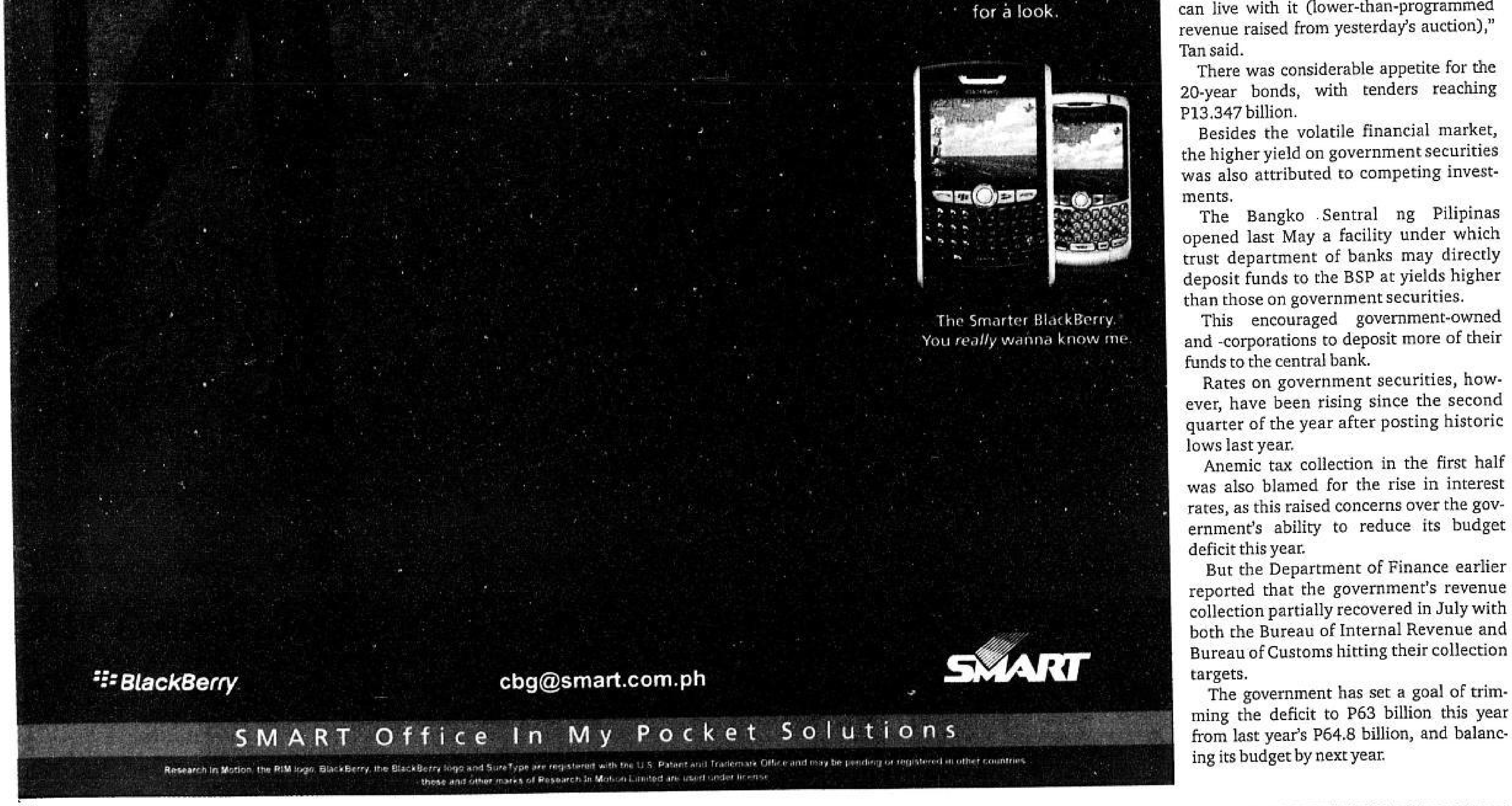

The GoNegosyo Caravan is on the move and is off to key cities all over the Philippines. And its next stop is the thriving city of Manila.

GoNegosyo sa Manila
September 7, 2007
Philam Center for the Arts,
UN Avenue, Ermita, Manila

8:00-9:00 Registration • 9:00-9:10 National Anthem • 9:10-9:20 Invocation • 9:20-9:30 Welcome Remarks • 9:30-10:00 Awarding of Most Inspiring Entrepreneurs • 10:00-11:45 Keynote Forum with GoNegosyo Advocates and Most Inspiring Entrepreneurs from Manila • 11:45-12:30 Book Signing

Meet and greet the GoNegosyo advocates and celebrity entrepreneurs!
Sen. Mar Roxas • Sec. Cerge Remonde (PMS) • Atty. Felipe Gozon (GMA Network) • Paolo Bediones (1Tech.ph) • Chit Juan (Figaro) • Henry Lim Bon Liong (Sterling Corp.) • Victor Tan (Bobson Jeans) • Bernadette Allyson (Franchisee, Reyes Haircutters) • Jeffrey Hidalgo (Cutting Edge Asia Products Corporation) • Karen Davila • Cito Beltran

GoNegosyo Caravan Goes To MANILA!

We're inviting all Manileños and students from the University Belt to come and join us in this fun and unique entrepreneurial event!

NEGOSYO Caravan

FREE Admission

Most Inspiring Manila Entrepreneurs

Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship

Mrs. Betty Go-Belmonte
Philippine Star - For her unwavering commitment to press freedom and entrepreneurial savvy which allowed her to launch and establish broadsheets that have courageously reported the truth during times of upheaval and unrest

Dr. Nicanor Reyes
Far Eastern University - For having founded one of the leading private, non-sectarian educational institutions in the country that strives to empower Filipinos by increasing access to education and inculcating in them the necessary skills to run enterprises.

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10

LIFESTYLE

Editor: Chato [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) or e-mail [illegible]

Let the games begin

We have packed the first-ever issue of 2bU! Sports with a ton of stories: Kobe Bryant's Manila visit, UAAP cheerdance competition defending champions UST Salinggawi, the UST Yellow Jackets, UAAP and NCAA highlights, Michele Bumgarner, [illegible] Radio, James and Philip Younghusband, PJ Barua, FIFA Philippine team. Even dogs that wear jerseys. And we're only getting started.

In celebration of the passion of Pinoys for sports, 2bU! will come up with a monthly special exploring the gaming life. If you want to become a part of 2bU! Sports, e-mail us 2bu@inquirer.com.ph

Having It All

Some people want to live life on their own terms, get what they want, without any hassle. And who wouldn't? Imagine a buff body without having to work out. Or wearing those sexy four-inch stilettos without pinched toes and painful feet! Life would be so much better! In fact, it would be just like Coke Light-- all the great taste you love, and none of the calories you don't. You can have as much as you want without any worries!

In an alternate world where you could really have it all: there would be stolen kisses without getting slapped. You could shoot from the half-court line and not miss. Enjoy romantic movie without cheesy lines, and eat cheese popcorn without getting yellow fingers. You could enjoy the best of everything without any consequences.

Well perhaps you can't always get what you want. But you can definitely have it all with Coke Light. All pleasure, no guilt. This you can be sure of.

So grab a Coke Light now. It's the first step to having it all.

Coca-Cola
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Low waist jeans,
no love handles.

great taste, no calories
Coca-Cola
light
330 mL

Have it ALL

Coca-Cola
light

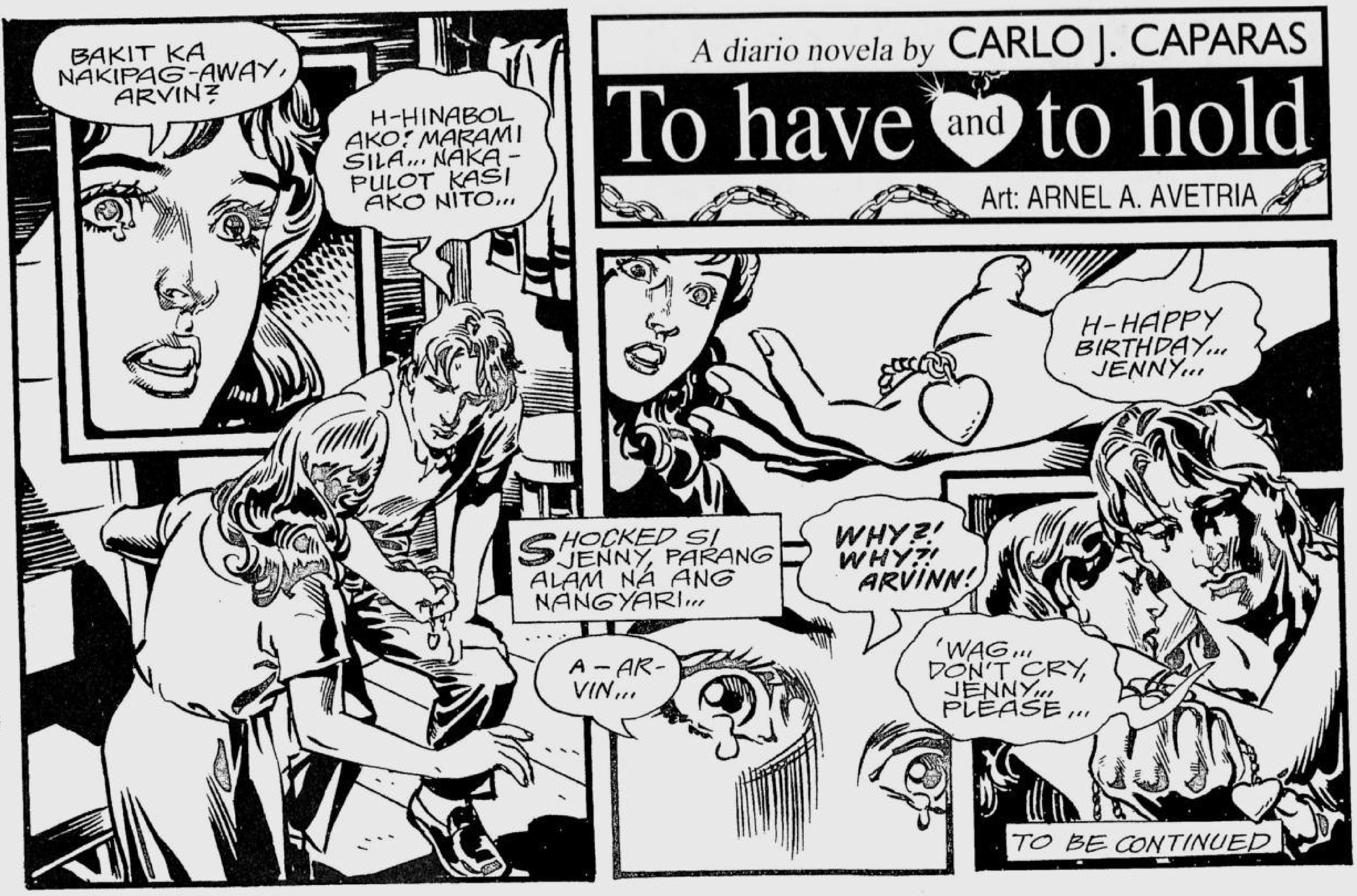
great taste. no calories.

"C[illegible] [illegible] and the Dynamic Ribbon device are registered trademarks [illegible] Coca-Cola Company © 2007. The Coca-Cola Company

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

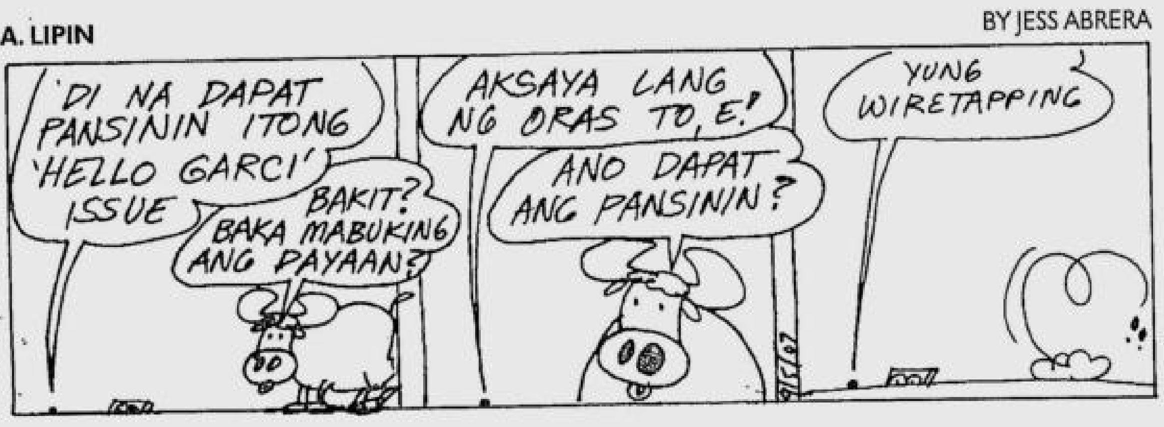
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


BAKIT KA NAKIPAG-AWAY, ARVIN?
H-HINABOL AKO! MARAMI SILA... NAKA-PULOT KASI AKO NITO...
H-HAPPY BIRTHDAY... JENNY...
SHOCKED SI JENNY, PARANG ALAM NA ANG NANGYARI...
WHY?! WHY?! ARVINN!
A-AR-VIN...
'WAG... DON'T CRY, JENNY... PLEASE...
TO BE CONTINUED

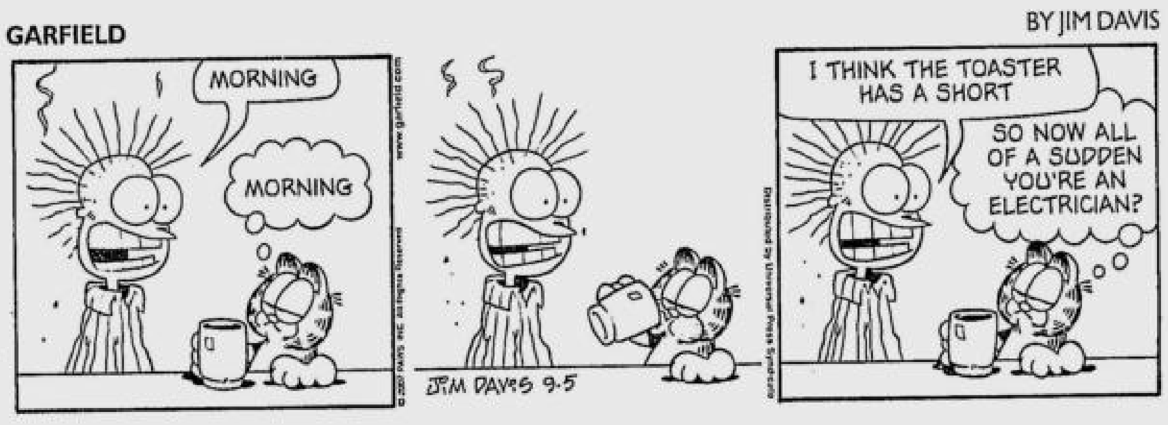
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


'DI NA DAPAT PANSININ ITONG 'HELLO GARCI' ISSUE
BAKIT? BAKA MABUKING ANG PAYAAN?
AKSAYA LANG NG ORAS TO, E!
ANO DAPAT ANG PANSININ?
YUNG WIRETAPPING
9/5/07

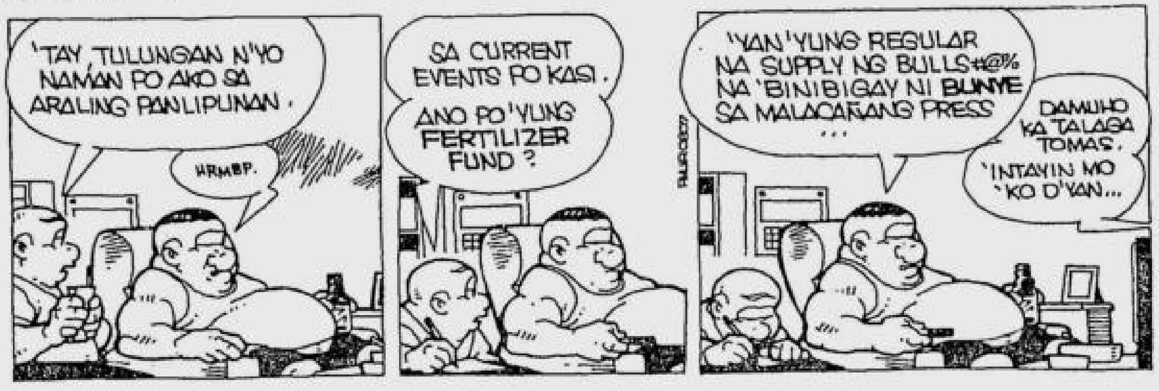
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


MORNING
MORNING
JIM DAVIS 9-5
I THINK THE TOASTER HAS A SHORT
SO NOW ALL OF A SUDDEN YOU'RE AN ELECTRICIAN?

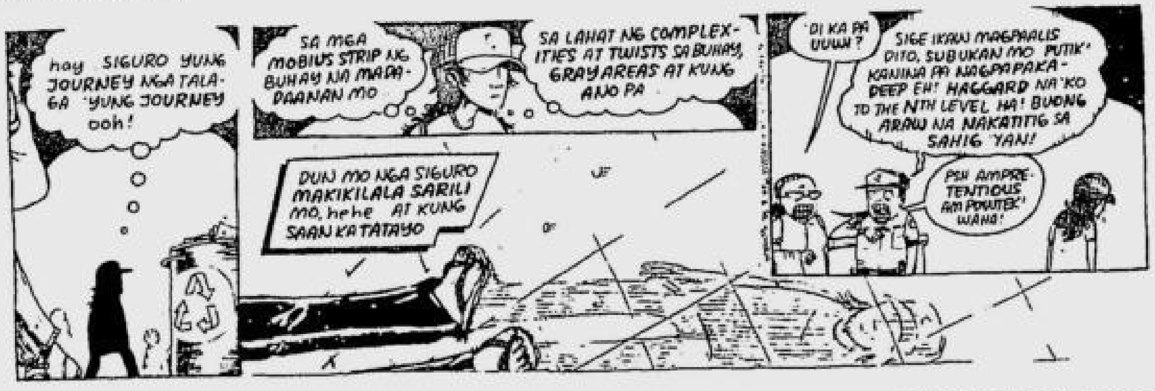
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


'TAY, TULUNGAN N'YO NAMAN PO AKO SA ARALING PANLIPUNAN.
HRMBP.
SA CURRENT EVENTS PO KASI.
ANO PO'YUNG FERTILIZER FUND?
'YAN 'YUNG REGULAR NA SUPPLY NG BULLS#@% NA 'BINIBIGAY NI BUNYE SA MALACAÑANG PRESS ...
DAMUHO KA TALAGA TOMAS.
'INTAYIN MO 'KO D'YAN...

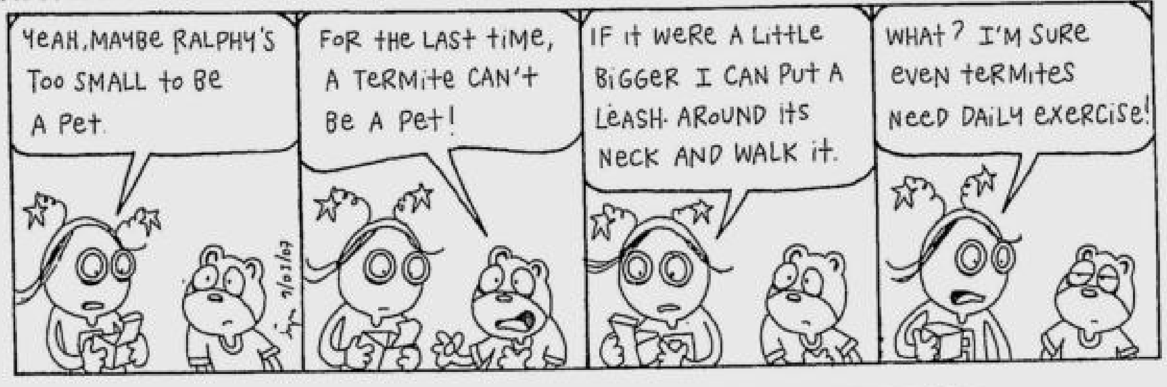
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

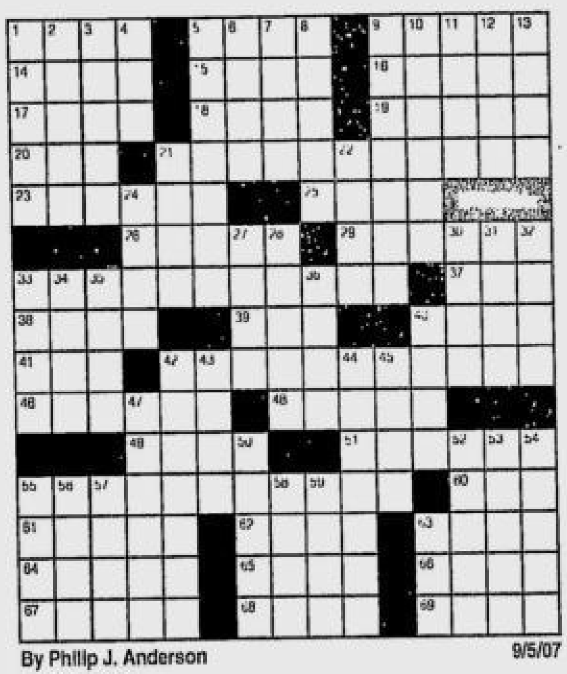

hay SIGURO YUNG JOURNEY NGA TALAGA 'YUNG JOURNEY ooh!
SA MGA MOBIUS STRIP NG BUHAY NA MADADAANAN MO
SA LAHAT NG COMPLEXITIES AT TWISTS SA BUHAY, GRAY AREAS AT KUNG ANO PA
DUN MO NGA SIGURO MAKIKILALA SARILI MO, hehe AT KUNG SAAN KA TATAYO
'DI KA PA UUWI?
SIGE IKAW MAGPAALIS DITO, SUBUKAN MO 'PUTIK' KANINA PA NAGPAPAKA-DEEP EH! HAGGARD NA'KO TO THE NTH LEVEL HA! BUONG ARAW NA NAKATITIG SA SAHIG 'YAN!
PSH AMPRETENTIOUS AM POWTEK! WAHA!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


YEAH, MAYBE RALPHY'S TOO SMALL TO BE A PET.
FOR THE LAST TIME, A TERMITE CAN'T BE A PET!
IF IT WERE A LITTLE BIGGER I CAN PUT A LEASH AROUND ITS NECK AND WALK IT.
WHAT? I'M SURE EVEN TERMITES NEED DAILY EXERCISE!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

9/5/07

ACROSS
1 Norse god
5 Silent mollusk?
9 Puts in order
14 Tempo
15 __ avis
16 Minneapolis suburb
17 Gung-ho
18 Actor Sharif
19 "Psycho" setting
20 Fabrication
21 Unusual sighting in the paddock?
23 Overexertion
25 Fill to excess
26 Pilfer
29 Get cozy
33 Unusual sighting at the aquarium?
37 Lobster eggs
38 Brit's indignant comment
39 Nigerian tribe
40 Serengeti cat
41 Saloon
42 Unusual sighting at the aviary?
46 Hot-fudge creation
48 Saab models
49 Turow book
51 Black Sea port
55 Unusual sighting at the aviary?
60 Latvian chess great
61 Of hearing
62 Dry gully
63 Kemo __
64 Hackneyed
65 First name in mysteries
66 Ended
67 Ninnies
68 Dawn Chong and Carruth
69 Sleuth Wolfe

DOWN
1 Iridescent gems
2 Ship's crane
3 More aloof
4 Writer Buntline
5 Song stylist
6 Mary's charge
7 U.A.E. part
8 Martin and Astor
9 On-location newscasts
10 Worships
11 Young lice
12 Tricky joint?
13 Bando and Maglie
21 Sexologist Shere
22 Suspend
24 Pale gray of face
27 Puccini song
28 Egypt's neighbor
30 The Magi, e.g.
31 Diving bird
32 Evenings to poets
33 Teases
34 Twin of Jacob
35 Phooey!
36 Slangy turndown
40 __-majesty
42 Altar lighting
43 Villain's look
44 Twists of fate
45 Deities
47 Contribute
50 Not as elevated
52 Barrel part
53 Cavalry weapon
54 Olds model
55 Pro __ (in proportion)
56 Sharer's pronoun
57 "QB VII" author
58 Theda of films
59 Not working
63 Male heir

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

S	U	I	T		N	I	L	E		P	H	I	S	H
A	G	R	A		I	C	O	N		A	E	T	N	A
P	L	A	N	E	T	H	O	L	L	Y	W	O	O	D
P	I	N	D	A	R		M	A	A	M		O	B	J
			E	T	A	T		C	R	E	E			
	C	O	M	E	T	C	L	E	A	N	S	E	R	
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D	A	T	A		S	Y	N	C	H		U	S	D	A
T	R	E	V	I			C	O	O	L		O	D	E
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P	S	U		B	E	E	F		N	U	A	N	C	E
S	U	N	M	I	C	R	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	S
A	V	I	O	N		E	X	A	M		H	M	O	S
T	A	X	E	D		D	Y	E	S		A	O	N	E

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9/5/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a kind heart and lots of common sense. You also have excellent business savvy. Many of you develop strong technical skills. You like to be physically fit, and you will always work for your economic security. In your late teens, you become much more social and interested in popularity. This year a major change could take place, perhaps as significant as around 1999.

Birthdate of: Raquel Welch, actress; Peter Wingfield, actor; Cathy Guisewite, cartoonist.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today Mercury, the planet of communication, moves opposite your sign for the next three weeks. This will be an excellent time to clarify things with others.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): The next few weeks are excellent for any kind of mental work for you. Your mind will be far more attentive to detail than usual.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Today your ruler, Mercury, moves into a fellow Air Sign. That means the next three weeks are a wonderful time for expressing your thoughts or for communicating to others.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might feel like withdrawing somewhat in the next few weeks. Memories from your childhood will probably surface in your mind. You need some private time to think.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You'll have a strong desire to communicate to others during the next few weeks. You will especially want to talk to siblings, relatives and neighbors.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): All kinds of money-making ideas might occur to you now and in the next few weeks. You might want to run something up the flagpole to see if anyone salutes.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Today Mercury moves into your sign, where it will stay for the next three weeks. This has the effect of making your mind very sharp and rapid!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): In the month ahead, your ability to do research is excellent. If you're looking for answers or secrets, you'll find them!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Begin to look for opportunities to talk to friends and groups so you can share your goals and dreams for the future with them. Their feedback will be helpful to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): In the next few weeks, you'll have opportunities to make plans about your professional life or your life direction in general. This is a great time to talk to bosses, parents and authority figures in your life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Start to make travel plans, or figure out how you can get extra training or go back to school. You're eager to learn. You want to expand your world!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Expect to do research and planning about shared possessions, debt, taxes, inheritances and anything you share with anyone else. You might be concerned about your partner's income.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

								7
			5	2			6	9
		3			1		8	
	5	1	7			9		
4				8		6		
	2	6	3			8		1
	9		2			4		8
		5			6	1		2
						7	3	

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Difficulty Level ★★★

9/05

Answer to previous puzzle

8	5	3	4	2	9	6	1	7
7	4	6	1	3	5	8	2	9
2	1	9	8	7	6	5	3	4
1	9	7	5	6	4	3	8	2
3	8	4	9	1	2	7	5	6
5	6	2	3	8	7	4	9	1
6	7	5	2	9	3	1	4	8
9	3	8	6	4	1	2	7	5
4	2	1	7	5	8	9	6	3

Difficulty Level ★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

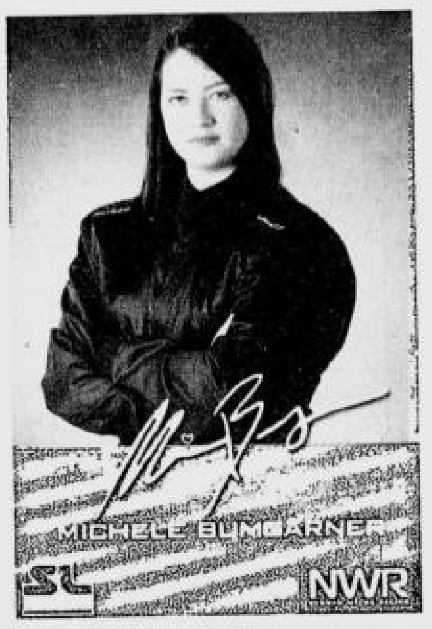
Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Speed lady

US racing sensation Michele Bumgarner is living the dream

WHEN THE alarm clock rings, most high-school students face the same daily battle: fight through the fogginess of their fatigue, find something halfway acceptable to throw on, and prepare for another day of lectures and lab work.

However, to gorgeous 17-year-old Filipino-American Michele Bumgarner, the otherwise hated wake-up call means the ultimate chase after her dreams—literally.



After some hometown training in the Philippines, Michele, who was recently appointed Ambassador of Goodwill for Sports, Tourism and Wellness by the Philippine Department of Tourism, has moved to the US and set up base in the racing capital of America, North Carolina.

For Michele, the newest sensation to S&L Racing, each new day brings another exciting opportunity to get strapped to a vehicle that most racing-nuts only dream about driving. With her love and aptitude for racing combined with her determination to prove any dream is achievable, it's no wonder Michele has decided to skip her senior year of high school to chase her dream—a career in open-wheel racing.

As kids her age work to receive their diplomas during graduation, Michele has already graduated at the top of her class in the world of go-karting, winning championships throughout Asia and Europe. She's now preparing with her new team to continue her success in the US professional circuits.

When she's not training on the legendary tracks of the Carolinas, Michele is jet-setting all over the United States—constantly challenging new courses and vehicles. These are not trips of leisure for Michele—she is working hard, striving to fulfill her lifelong dream. This intense driver-development program is aimed to prepare her for the ultra-competitive circuits of US professional racing.

To help her succeed, the famed racer and 1990 winner of 24 Hours of Le Mans, Price Cobb, has joined Michele as mentor and trainer. With this legendary racing expert behind her and the best facilities America can offer at her service, Michele's leap to professional racing is on track to be a success.

She earned it

Michele's arrival in the professional racing arena was never guaranteed—she worked hard to earn it. After showcasing her talent at the Jim Russell International Racing Driving School in Sonoma, California, she was asked to extend her stay to compete in the minority driver shootout known as the Accelerate Program, hosted by S&L Racing with owners Gale Sayers and Ray Lewis. As six drivers raced five different types of vehicles, Michele proved her aptitude for speed extended far beyond go-karts as she impressed S&L Racing and was chosen as its new driver.

With her newly earned spot on the team, Michele now has chief engineer Don Halliday and team manager Ove Olsson working behind the scenes to help her focus on fully realizing her potential. Her continued success on the track has also resulted in Michele joining forces with Chicago, Illinois-based Newman Wachs Racing, owned by actor Paul Newman and which boasts over 20 years of combined, top-level motorsports experience.

When Michele is not busy racing, testing or training, she finds time to do what typical teenagers love: shop for new clothes, surf and chat on her personal computer, and hang out with her friends. Michele also does some commercial modeling and the occasional sound bite for companies in the Philippines and abroad.

It seems that it was so long ago since Michele raced her first go-karts in the Philippines, but in reality it has only been a short time. She has embarked on a long journey to become successful in professional open-wheel racing and she is now well on her way. As her dream transforms into reality, the drive that thrusts her into Victory Lane is also pushing her to the top of professional racing at such a young age. A perfect fit for S&L Racing, Michele is revolutionizing the face of US open-wheel racing. She is doing this while being an inspiration to the racing community, including those with whom she works and anyone else who dares to step outside the box to chase their dreams.

RACING to success

A life full of surprises

REENACTING the "mobbing"

ONE OF THE emerging hard-court idols of this generation is DLSU Green Archer PeeJay Barua. Currently, Barua does not get that much playing time, but thanks to one recent shocking incident, he is now gaining popularity among UAAP fans.

Barua, whose looks are often described as a combination of actors James Blanco and Richard Gomez, was mobbed by a group of girls last July 26 at the South Gate of Araneta Coliseum just before the much-anticipated duel between rivals Ateneo Blue Eagles and DLSU Green Archers.

Barua was quietly observing an interview of DLSU coach Franz Pumaren when seven young girls "attacked" the cager.

It was reported that the girls kissed Barua all over before Araneta security men were able to restrain the girls. Barua did not sustain any injuries except for minor scratches and a few kiss marks.

Born Dec. 20, 1987, Barua hails from a small town in Guimaras Island, Iloilo province. He is the youngest child of Fe Barua, a grade-school teacher, and Gerardo Barua, a seaman. He has two older siblings, Kent and Honey, who describe the rising superstar as a shy person. The low-profile but talented Barua never expected he would be propelled to celebrity status, certainly not through the controversial mobbing incident.

GREEN Archer

TAKING a shot

Talented DLSU Green Archer PeeJay Barua got the shock of his life when seven young girls threw themselves at him at the Araneta Coliseum recently

Impressive skills

However, the Araneta incident was not the first time fate threw a surprise in Barua's path. The first came in early April 2005 when, after graduating from high school and playing for the University of Iloilo, Barua went to La Salle accompanied by a relative to inquire if he could try out for the team. Unfortunately, there was no scheduled tryout for that day. However, practice was ongoing and Coach Pumaren allowed him to join.

Pumaren was impressed with Barua's basketball skills and invited him to join several practices. He even considered bringing the rookie to play with the team in Hong Kong and Korea.

Barua was then instructed to take the school's entrance examinations. After he passed, he was given a slot in the team by Pumaren.

"I got lucky," says Barua. "I was in the right place at the right time."

About the Araneta incident, he stammers, "I don't know what to say. It was too sudden and I really don't know why and how it happened."

His talent on court and the much-talked-about incident has drawn the spotlight to Barua. His career is definitely worth watching as he gains more playing time.

ZUNIC: THE GIFT OF EFFORTLESS SLIMMING

Crash diets, pills, surgery, and injections can be safely forgotten – new slimming techniques can give you that slim, curvaceous figure you've long dreamed of without pain or a long wait.

"What we've done is to bring in the latest technology from overseas, and apply it to the problems associated with obesity and overeating," says Roxanne Sarthou, Managing Director of the state-of-the-art slimming centers known as Zunic. "We help people lose weight so that they can begin exercising if they want to, whether they wish to modify their eating habits or not."

Zunic's Slimming and Body Sculpting Method melts away unsightly body fat without surgery, diet, pills or exercise. Weight loss is conducted without the sweating, anxiety, and pain associated with traditional methods.

A client stretches out comfortably on a plush treatment couch, and fat is literally melted away using the latest technology such as light therapy, lasers, and radio frequency to non-invasively reach under the skin and dissolve stubborn fat deposits. The results are close to instantaneous. Visible results are evident in the course of a single treatment, and can be seen in as little as 45 minutes. Up to 24 hours after treatment, fat is excreted through normal body functions, with no side effects whatsoever.

To give its clients the best possible care, Zunic maintains a full complement of trained personnel. Pre-treatment medical checks are performed by fully trained Program Consultants side-by-side with licensed physicians, and all treatments are conducted by highly qualified medical staff.

Best of all, Zunic provides results with a minimum of time and effort. Zunic clients can waltz right out of their treatments and back into their lives without a pause!

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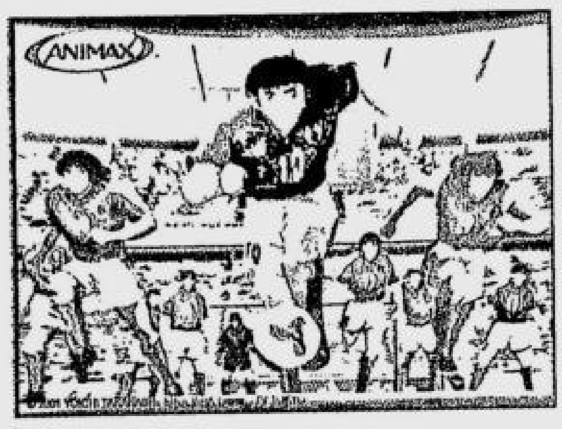
Ball brothers

Football-playing Fil-Brit brothers Philip and James Younghusband are the new sports ambassadors of youth channel Animax

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

Photos care of Animax and Adidas



CAPTAIN Tsubasa

THE YOUNGHUSBANDS

FOOTBALL-PLAYING FIL-Brit brothers Philip and James Younghusband have been adding feather after feather to their cap ever since they started playing with the Chelsea football club as kids.

From competing in several football matches to entering the world of local modeling (the two are the new faces of watch store No Curfew under the N:C Nation label and sports brand Adidas, plus Phil is also the latest Hanford guy), the talented lads are continuing to step up their game.

The brothers' most recent accomplishment is being chosen as the new sports ambassadors of youth channel Animax, owned by Sony Pictures Entertainment Networks. Dynamic, adventurous and excellent at their chosen fields, the Younghusbands are the perfect spokespeople for Animax, a channel that encourages the youth to be their own special, unique selves.

They couldn't have hopped on board at a more perfect time because this September, Animax offers exciting sports anime programs ranging from football to basketball and even rollerblading in the air. The coolest sports are in fact the highlight of the channel's new shows this month.

Starting this Sept. 12 at 6 p.m. is Air Gear, a fast-paced adaptation of Ito Oogure's manga hit that comes with lots of high-flying, inline skating action. For basketball fans, there is Dear Boys, the sassy coming-of-age comedy series starting on Sept. 19 at 6:30 p.m.

What the brothers are most excited about is the popular anime series Captain Tsubasa: Road to Dream, because it's all about football.

Premiering this Sept. 25 at 5:30 p.m., the series is about Tsubasa Oozora's quest to become a world-class footballer, leading him to Spain where he signs for Catalan giants FC Catalunya.

As Tsubasa awaits the kickoff in a crucial tie, memories of his football life come flooding back: his first meeting with his Brazilian mentor Roberto, his rivalry with ace striker Hyuuga and goalkeeper Wakabayashi, and victory with the Japanese Under-16 team in the World Youth Championship.

But now, Tsubasa—as well as Hyuuga and Wakabayashi—will have to face some of Europe's toughest leagues, as they hope to lead Japan to glory in the next International Cup.

Flourishing career

"Like Captain Tsubasa, I am also looking forward to face the challenges that lay ahead of me as my football career in Europe continues to flourish," says the younger Phil, who at only 20 years old is Chelsea FC's most valuable striker at present. He recently signed a contract with the Danish top league club, Esbjerg FC, going on loan in Denmark for the rest of the 2007-2008 season.

His official website, www.philyounghusband.com, is set to be launched this month as well.

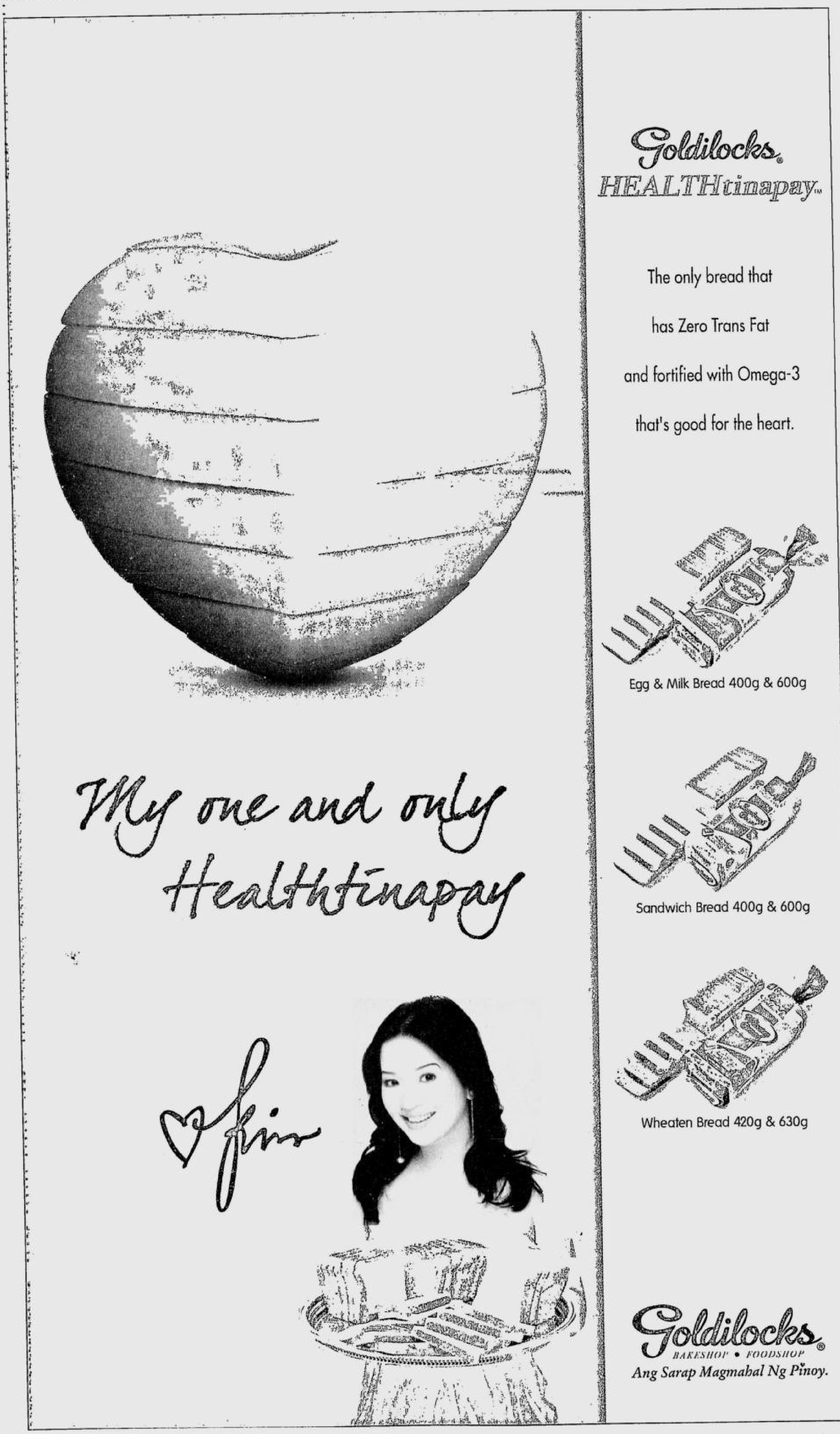
"We are huge fans of Animax and whenever we visit the Philippines, it's one of the channels we enjoy watching the most," says James, 21, a midfielder for Woking FC in England. An in-demand model, James is one of the favorites to win Candy Magazine's Cutie of the Year this year.

These ball-kicking brothers are clearly into sports, and it's not just football that's on their mind. James and Phil are also excellent at tennis, basketball and swimming.

Oh, and as much as they like sweating it out in actual games, they also enjoy sitting back, relaxing and enjoying watching anything and everything about sports—sports shows, sports competitions and most especially sports-themed anime shows exclusively on Animax.

E-mail the author at ninomarksablan@yahoo.com

KICKING it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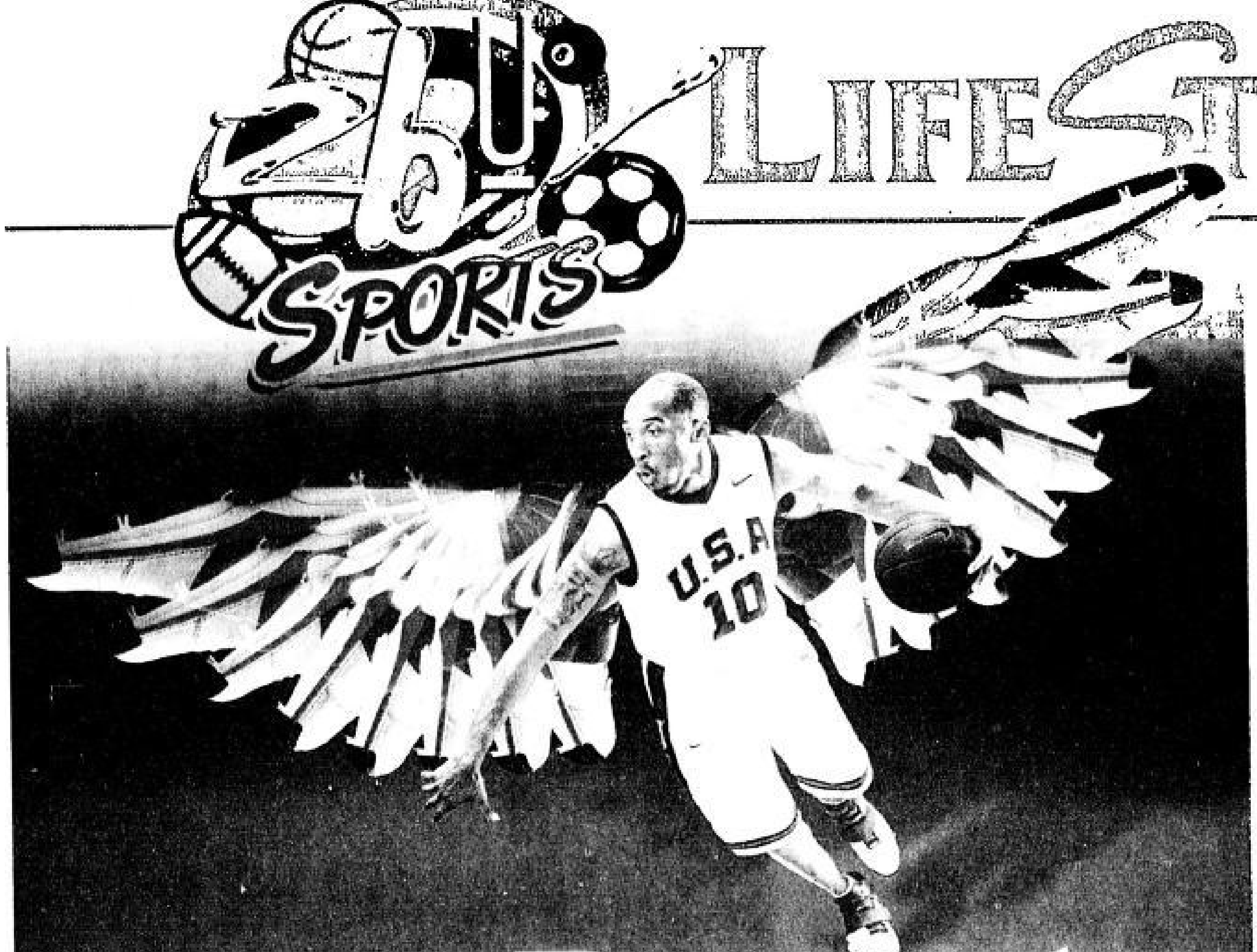

Kobe Bryant is in Manila

The basketball star is in town for a special show and to spend time with basketball-loving kids—and 2bU! Sports has tickets to give away so you can see him in action

By Pam Pastor

PEOPLE DIDN'T seem to care that it was only 6 a.m. It didn't seem to matter either that Nike's Bonifacio High Street store would only open at 12 noon.

They stood in line for hours in their quest to get their hands on tickets to The Kobe Supernatural Asia Tour Manila. In just 20 minutes, over 2,000 tickets disappeared, claimed by some of the country's biggest Kobe Bryant fans.

Today, these fans are in for a treat. Kobe will be headlining the Kobe Supernatural Manila event at the Philippine Sports Arena (formerly Ultra). He will be sharing his training regimen with young and enthusiastic Pinoy ballers. The event will start at 4 p.m.

But his visit really begins earlier at Nike Park in The Fort where he will be meeting kids from the Eliseo Belen Charity.

"Kobe Bryant serves as a basketball icon, inspiration and role-model to a lot of our young Filipino athletes and Nike Philippines is proud to bring him closer to his fans," said Melissa Crucillo, Nike Philippines country marketing manager.

"The one-day visit is developed as an opportunity for Kobe to work with Filipino kids and to inspire them to work toward realizing their hoop dreams."

Nike has launched a special Kobe Tour Tee for the occasion, which was made available just a few days ago. The new version of Kobe II will also be launched during the tour. The shoes will hit the stores tomorrow.

Kobe's Manila visit is part of his Supernatural Asia Tour 2007. His next stops include Taipei, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing.

THE LONG line

FAMILY affair. The Kobe Supernatural Asia Tour 2007

Win tickets to The Kobe Supernatural Asia Tour!

IN CASE YOU DIDN'T make it to The Fort when they gave away tickets, don't fret. INQUIRER 2bU! has tickets to give away. Tell us why you're a huge Kobe fan. E-mail us at iwannaseekobe@gmail.com. Don't forget to include your name, age, school/office and contact info. Deadline of entries is today at 12 noon.

FANS of all ages line up for Kobe.

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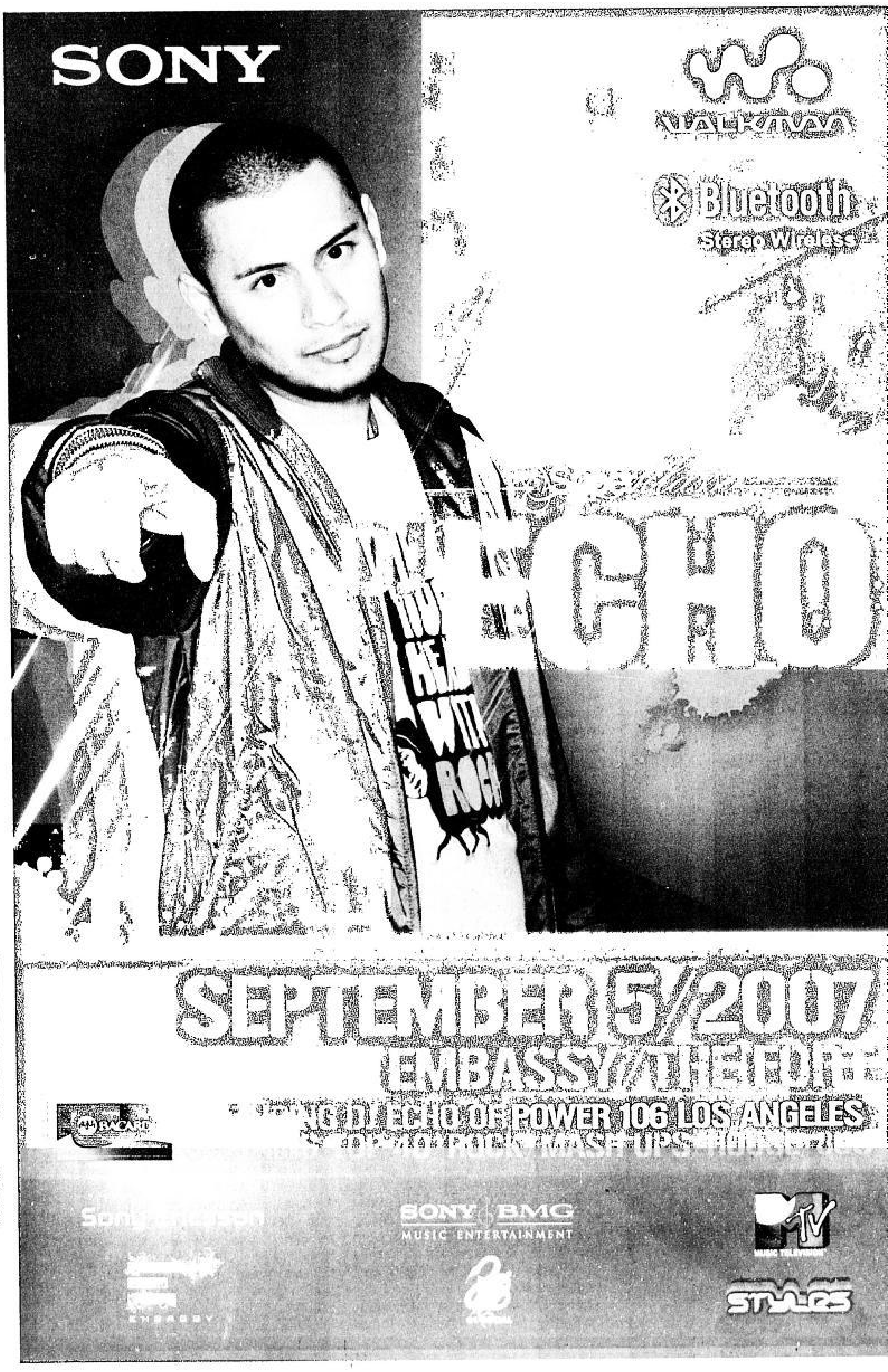
Nestea Iced Tea Calamansi 480ml
ONLY AT 7-ELEVEN


SONY
WALKMAN
Bluetooth
Stereo Wireless
ECHO
SEPTEMBER 5/2007
EMBASSY/THE FOR
NG DJ ECHO OF POWER 106 LOS ANGELES
SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT
EMBASSY
MTV MUSIC TELEVISION
STYLES

Champions of CHEER

By Ruth L. Navarra

The UST Salinggawi Dance Troupe holds the most titles in the league with eight wins

TWELVE YEARS AGO, WHEN CHEERing was a battle on the sidelines being fought by the Ateneo Blue Babble Battalion and the De La Salle Pep Squad, the UST Salinggawi Dance Troupe (SDT) bravely took the center stage and redefined the landscape of cheering forever.

On the first UAAP cheerdance competition in 1995, every other team went for the traditional cheers and the basic lifts. SDT upped the ante by introducing complicated pyramids, basket tosses and swan dives.

They were the first to make the audience gasp with excitement and awe. Their swift and clean transitions made them stand out from the rest. The group's innovations paid off because they got the very first cheerdance title, and the next two titles after that.

After winning for three straight years, the troupe opted not to join the competition in 1998. The FEU Cheering Squad became the champion that year.

Rivalry

The year 1999 saw the beginning of a rivalry between the two squads. SDT was eager to take the title back, but they only got the second spot, while the UP Pep Squad's stellar performance earned them their first championship.

The UP Pep held on to the title for another two years, matching SDT's own record. The UP Pep also introduced a few innovations of their own in stunts and most especially in uniforms.

In 2002, SDT regained the title when the group won with a convincing three-point difference over the UE Cheering Squad, while UP Pep slid down to third.

The troupe has clearly learned lessons from their previous hiatus. Now, they show no signs of giving up the trophy—not when they've won consecutively for the past five years.

"We want to keep on competing until the day they take the title from us and even after that. We will get sad if we lose but it's more important to fight," says SDT member Jane Leynes.

To date, the troupe holds the most titles in the league with a total of eight championships. They're aiming to get their ninth title through a six-peat win.

Yet, they're the first to admit that it's not going to be easy. It's not just the UP Pep and the FEU Cheering Squad that worry them. The two teams have been snapping at their heels the past few years.

"All teams are becoming more competitive because when we watch them on TV or when we see them on the sidelines, we see a lot of improvements in them. We see them doing stunts they've never tried before," says SDT member Lady Dazha Dacanay.

Faced with this pressure, it's their choreographer and coach Ryan Silva who reminds them not to worry about the other teams, but instead to focus on performing their own stunts well. Of such grit are champions made.

The cheerdance competition will be on Sept. 16.

THE ZIGZAG pyramid is a Salinggawi trademark, introduced into the competition in 1995.

GOING for ninth!

U-S-T let's go fight!

Calling all UST Salinggawi Dance Troupe Alumni members (1967-2007). You are invited to join the 40th anniversary grand celebration on Jan. 5-10, 2008. Call 7315744/7313101 loc. 8227, 0917-8128186, 0917-8344123, 0917-8288283 or 0918-5233522.

UAAP-NCCA highs and lows

The Tigers are undisputed comeback kings, Warriors remain undefeated, while the Ateneo-La Salle and Letran-San Beda rivalries heat up and game-fixing is exposed

By Jasmine W. Payo
Inquirer Sports

SHE CAME TO ACCOMPANY her daughter.

In one corner of the Big Dome gallery, she sat quietly as her hyperactive teen jumped, cheered wildly and screamed her lungs out for a glamour varsity squad.

The 40-ish mother smiled, but clutched her bag tightly. Her daughter's passion, it seemed, made her nervous.

But as she looked around, her unrestrained pubescent wasn't the only one gone hoops-mad. Even grown men cheered right on the edge of mayhem.

It was the UAAP, after all.

And this season, there are many reasons varsity obsessions have become both thrilling and frightening.

Long shot. By far, the Hail Mary shot of Ateneo freshman Kirk Long had become the favored clip on the highlight reel. Long wasn't supposed to take the final shot. But the American guard, who had spent most of his growing-up years in the Philippines, took the risk and gave the Blue Eagles the slimmest of win over defending champion University of Santo Tomas. With the ball in his hands in the last three seconds, the rookie heaved a long jumper and nailed it as the final buzzer sounded for a 72-71 Ateneo victory.

Warriors attack. The University of the East Red Warriors have amazingly won 12 straight games. Save for a few close shaves, the Warriors easily steamrolled the rest of the field. Different players step up every game, giving major headaches to many sideline tacticians. It's a puzzling yet potent gameplan for the only unbeaten collegiate squad.

Comeback king. In a miraculous stretch, the University of Santo Tomas Growling Tigers rose from 12 points down with less than two minutes to go. And the Tigers sustained the rampage in overtime to stun the La Salle Green Archers, 81-73. With the Archers' uncharacteristic meltdown, the Tigers also ended their seven-season losing streak against the Archers. But really, the victory was no surprise for the team that no one thought would win the championship last season.

Renewed feud. The country's fiercest rivalry turned more vicious this season. The on-court battle didn't end when the Ateneo Blue Eagles outlasted the La Salle Green Archers, 80-77, in overtime last July 26. La Salle put the game under protest, noting that Ateneo violated a league rule when it fielded foreign players Kirk Long and Zion Laterre at the same time. A heated week followed as the two camps traded barbs before league officials junked La Salle's protest due to lack of merit. The Archers graciously accepted the decision, but vowed to settle the score in another anticipated blockbuster showdown against the Eagles this Sunday.

Court to court. Action has also turned fiery over at the NCAA when the San Beda Red Lions dragged the games from the hard court to the trial court. Just a couple of weeks ago, San Beda obtained a 72-hour temporary restraining order (TRO) following a decision by league officials to suspend Lions star Yousif Aljamal for joining the PBA draft without officially informing the NCAA. The powerhouse squad later filed a 20-day TRO extension, but San Beda and league officials eventually reached an amicable settlement. The Lions dropped the TRO and offered to sit out Aljamal in the next two games.

Coaches clash. Two coaches nearly got into a fistfight after a rugged match between the San Beda Red Lions and the Jose Rizal University Bombers. Lions mentor Frankie Lim lashed out at the Bombers' rough play and nearly traded blows with JRU coach Ariel Vanguardia at the end of the game. Cooler heads intervened, but that didn't prevent them from exchanging harsh words.

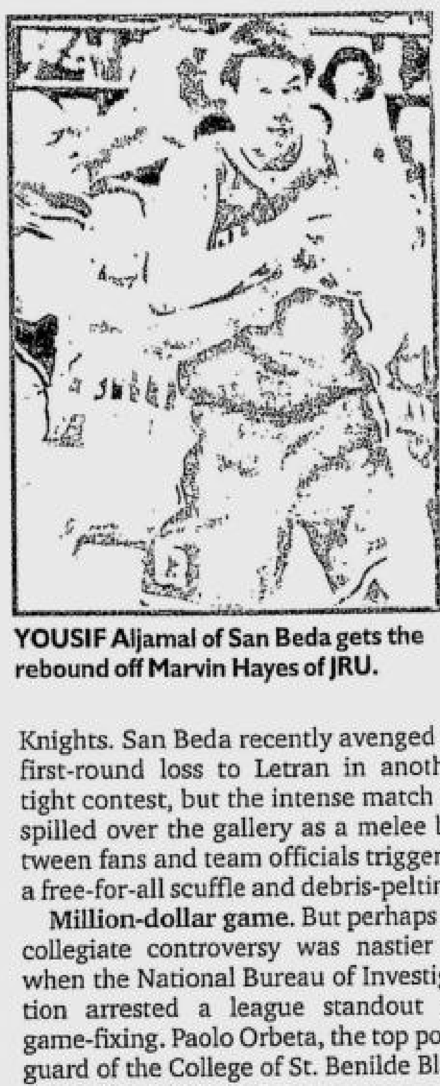
Free-for-all. And the Lions remained at the center of the storm in another fight-marred match against rival Letran Knights. San Beda recently avenged i first-round loss to Letran in anoth tight contest, but the intense match u spilled over the gallery as a melee b tween fans and team officials triggere a free-for-all scuffle and debris-peltin

Million-dollar game. But perhaps collegiate controversy was nastier when the National Bureau of Investig tion arrested a league standout f game-fixing. Paolo Orbeta, the top poi guard of the College of St. Benilde Bla ers, got caught in an entrapment oper tion along with three other suspects la month. In the investigation, the leag learned of syndicates that gambled game results by placing bets worth m lions of pesos! The NCAA maintained was an isolated case. But the incide only underscored how irrationally i portant—not only for fans—collegia hoops had turned out.

RABEH Al-Hussaini of Ateneo is triple teamed by James Mangahas, TY Tang and Rico Maierhofer of De La Salle.

ARSHIMEDEE David and Harvey Porras of St. Benilde with Rafael Jasul of Letran

ATENEO'S Eric Salamat drives against Adamson's Leo Canuday.



YOUSIF Aljamal of San Beda gets the rebound off Marvin Hayes of JRU.

Seeing yellow

By Patrick Leonard M. Mayo
2bU! Contributor

The UST Yellow Jackets can be counted on to rally the entire Thomasian community behind the Salinggawi Dance Troupe and the Growling Tigers

THE DOMINANCE OF THE University of Santo Tomas Salinggawi Dance Troupe (SDT) in the UAAP Cheerdance battles has been attributed to the group's impeccable moves, daring stunts and seamless execution of its routines.

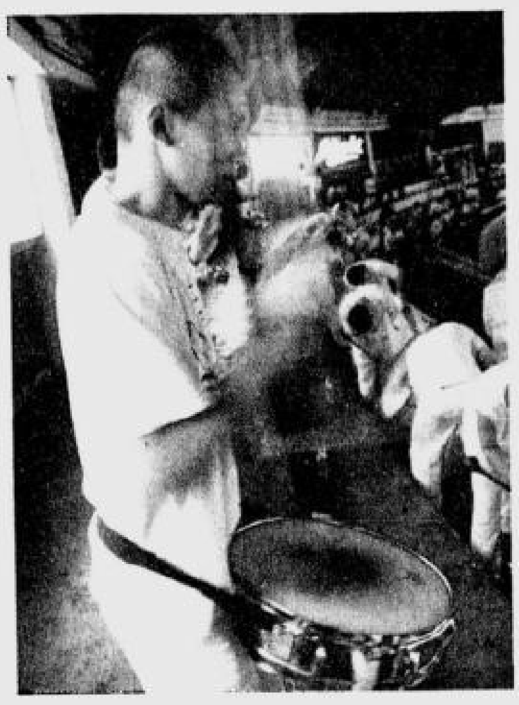
But there is one more vital ingredient in the success of the multi-titled squad: The UST Yellow Jackets.

Taking the name of a breed of wasps from North America known for their yellow and black colors, deadly sting and the buzzing sound they create, the UST Yellow Jackets bring into the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) the intensity and pulsating drum beats that inject extra energy to SDT's moves.

"Though these wasps are small, they still make loud noises," says Yellow Jackets president John Evan Dominic Regala.

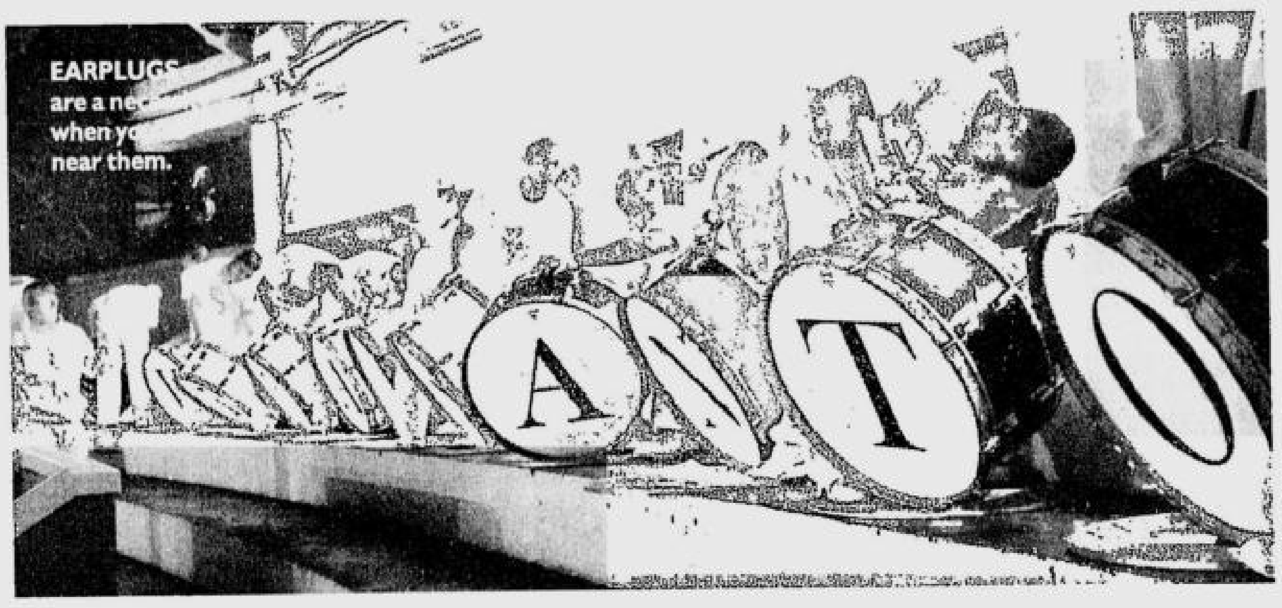
The group started as the UST Bangers in the mid-'90s, and was later recognized by the university as the Yellow Jackets in 2001.

"We complement them (SDT). They can stand on their own because of their dancing and acrobatic skills, but their performances may still seem incomplete if they don't get a dose of our drum beats," adds Regala.



KEEPING up with the beat

CAREFU [illegible]



EARPLUGS are a ne[illegible] when yo[illegible] near them.

A month before the actual cheering competitions, Regala says SDT choreographer Ryan Silva gives them the final music sequence for their performance.

"They leave it to us how we put the beats in their performance. We practice together two weeks before competition."

The Yellow Jackets are also behind the catchy tunes of "Go Uste!," "O! Defensa!" and many others.

"We challenge ourselves to come up with something original all the time," says Regala.

The group takes such pride in its originality that when some members read in an online forum that San Beda was claiming the "Animo" cheer as theirs, they looked into the claim. When they found out that the claim had basis, the Yellow Jackets immediately took it off its list of cheers.

Besides playing a crucial role in encouraging the crowd through their drum beats and cheers, especially when the UST Growling Tigers are trailing in crunch time, the group also tries to control the crowd from becoming rowdy.

No disrespect

During the half time of the first meeting between UST and Ateneo, the Blue Babble Battalion inadvertently performed over the five-minute time limit allowed for each squad. The Yellow Jackets then seemingly interrupted the former's performance during its final minutes, which enraged the Ateneo crowd.

"We did not mean to disrespect Ateneo. We just saw that a group of people were booing and jeering at UST's board member professor Felecitas Francisco when she passed by them. We don't want that to be a cause of riots like the one we recently saw in NCAA (National College Athletic Association), so we felt the need to avert the anger of the crowd who wanted to rise in her defense by cheering," explains Regala.

"It's nothing personal, we understand them. They're like us. It's a matter of school pride for them so we don't take it personally."

Truly, the UST Yellow Jackets can be counted on to rally the entire Thomasian community behind the title defense of both the Salinggawi Dance Troupe and the Growling Tigers.

HEALTHY AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

Information for Living Right

Question

I read that you need to drink eight glasses of water every day; do soft drinks also help keep your body hydrated?

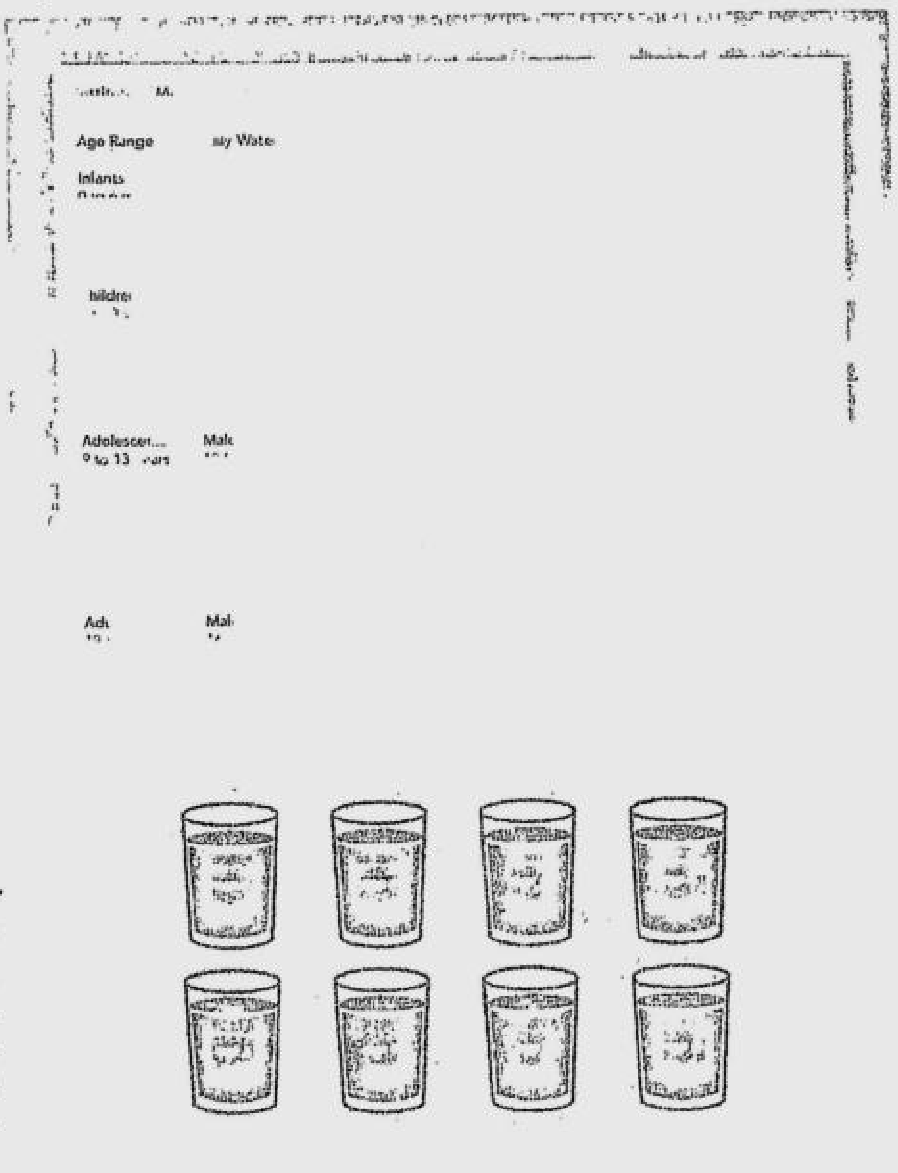
Answer

Yes, carbonated soft drinks can help quench your thirst and provide your body with its daily liquid for proper hydration. Hydration is critical in helping to maintain normal body temperature and for every physiological function and action by your body and brain. People can also get liquids from juice, milk, coffee, tea, fruits, vegetables and other foods and beverages. Even beverages with caffeine, like coffee and cola drinks, can help keep you hydrated. Besides basic hydration, carbonated soft drinks can also provide carbohydrate fuel that supplies energy necessary for daily activities. For most people, about 80 percent of total liquids each day come from drinking water and beverages; the other 20 percent of liquids come from food.

An extensive review by the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine determined that all beverages and foods can help keep you hydrated. It found that most people can meet their daily fluid needs through normal drinking behavior-beverages at meals, snacks and in other social situations-and by drinking when they are thirsty. People who are physically active or who live in hot climates may need to consume more fluids.

Sources:

- Institute of Medicine/National Academy of Sciences. Dietary Reference Intakes for Water, Potassium, Sodium, Chloride and Sulfate. 2004. http://www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=18495
- Grandjean AC, et al. The effect of caffeinated, non-caffeinated, caloric and non-caloric beverages on hydration. Journal American College. Nutrition, 19:591-600, 2000.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Peek's World

Tales of a Balanced, Healthy and Active Lifestyle

His impressive figure on the basketball court strikes fear in the hearts of opponents. Indeed, big man Ali Peek of the Philippine Basketball Association's Coca-Cola Tigers is a force to contend with, on and off the court.

But how does he do it? As Ali shared, there's only one secret to his physique- and that's living a balanced, healthy and active lifestyle or HAL. This Los Angeles, California native shared how the three values of HAL, which are eating a balanced diet, regular physical activity and proper hydration; help him perform better on the court and in life.

Keeping those muscles big

"There are a lot of other things I do outside of my job. I have a trainer and we work on a lot of little things, footwork, agility, and improving core strengths. The key is different types of physical activities to get you in better shape," shared Ali.

Although according to Ali, his health hasn't always been his top priority. "That's something that I had to do about four years ago. I had to make a decision. I had my last knee operation back then and I had heart palpitations, believe it or not. I also enjoyed the nightlife and stuff. But I had to make a decision, I was like "Okay I'm 28 years old. If I want to last longer I'm going to have to be accountable for my actions and turn things around."

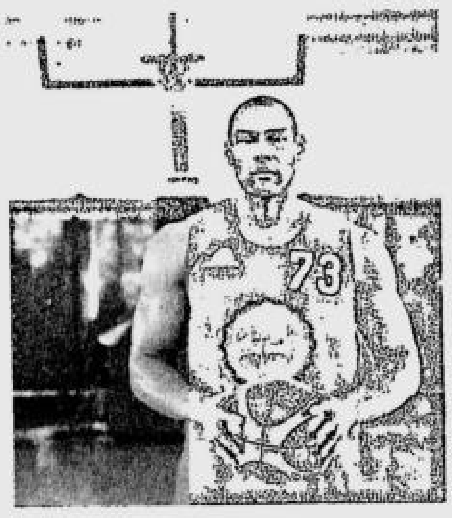
What are some of the things that Ali did? "My girlfriend and I started eating at home and changing stuff in our diet like eating all organic foods," he said. "It's one of the things that I do to get into better shape and have a better performance in the basketball court, which is the most important thing. That's the key because of what I do for a living."

But unlike Ali, you don't have to go all organic to stay fit. One of the key values of HAL is eating a balanced diet. This only means eating a wide variety of foods to meet your daily nutrition and caloric needs. There aren't any 'junk foods' that you need to avoid, only 'junk diets' or bad combinations of food. What's really important is to have balance in what you eat- not too much and not too little. You also need to ensure that you maintain a balance between how much you eat and how much calories you burn.

On core training

Another thing that Ali started to do to turn his health around was core training. He explained. "Core training can mean a lot of things. One thing that stands out is that your core (torso) is where your power comes from. If your torso area is weak, you don't have balance; you don't have control. If you don't have those things you can risk injury. It's very important and that's what I incorporated in my training four years ago. It's all about strengthening your mid-section which is very important especially if you engage in physical activities like basketball."

Regular physical activity is another value of HAL. But this doesn't mean that you need to have a strict gym regimen to stay fit. Physical activity can actually mean jogging in the park, walking your dog or even doing household chores like mopping the floor or cleaning your garden. In short, it's anything that can get your body moving and sweating.



All-powerful hydration

Another HAL value is hydration. Unfortunately, not many people know about it, despite that fact that it's very important in keeping your body functioning properly. "Hydration's very important," agreed Ali. "Your muscles need to stay hydrated. You need it in order to last out there. In order for me to perform at the level I want to perform, I have to hydrate myself. It prevents injuries too, prevents muscle pulls. It creates a natural form of lubrication for your joints. Because of what we do, we require a lot of fluids in our bodies, whether it's Powerade or water."

According to the Beverage Institute for Health and Wellness or BIHW website, being dehydrated can cause dizziness and impaired mental function. So it's important to drink 11-16 cups of total fluids each day depending on your age, weight, gender, the weather and your level of physical activity. Total fluids means that you don't get hydrated just through water. You can also choose your favorite beverages like soft drinks, teas and juices to hydrate yourself. Foods that contain water like fruits, vegetables and soups can also contribute to your hydration requirement.

Come one, come all

Ali is encouraging everyone to start living HAL today. As he said, "I think people should just start getting healthy; it's supposed to be fun too. Look at it as a lifestyle. If you can create that kind of lifestyle, then everything else will be easier. Yes it's hard at first and it takes time when your body is used to certain things. So start small and work your way up from there. Remember that it's a lifestyle and it's supposed to be a fun thing, not so much a discipline or a diet."

For more information about beverages and your health, visit the BIHW website at www.thebeverageinstitute.org. Live a balanced, healthy and active lifestyle today!

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Radio stars

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Noby Cabanero

MOST VARSITY TEAMS ARE dependent on alumni donations and the occasional corporate sponsorship. While this is not necessarily a bad way to look for funds for sports teams, there's always the fear of having to scrounge around for money once the source runs out.

Faced with this dilemma, Mico Halili, team manager of the Blue Eaglets (Ateneo's high school basketball team), decided to do something novel.

"Halikinu Radio was created in 2004," Halili says. "It was primarily designed to raise a substantial amount of funds for several varsity teams in the Ateneo. As opposed to the tradition of exclusively approaching prominent alumni for donations, we believed in starting a sustainable media project that would raise funds through corporate sponsorships built on legitimate media values."

Halikinu Radio, a combination rock-music and sports initiative that aims to showcase the different talents of Ateneo de Manila University students, is a program that features major concert events as well as daily segments on radio station NU 107.

"Musicians, athletes, graphic artists and event organizers are tapped for our events and programs," Halili says. "But what makes us special is that our audience is mainstream, as opposed to simply targeting the Ateneo students."

"Halikinu Radio is now an emerging brand when it comes to radio production, concert-event management and campus marketing."

Halikinu's events include the Big Blue Eagle cheer rally (held yearly to drum up support for the athletes), as well as a concert series and a radio festival where popular bands such as Rivermaya, Sponge Cola, Kjwan, Kapatid, Dicta License, Chicosci, and Ciudad, among others, play for the benefit of the Blue Eagles.

The NU 107 segments, on the other hand, feature indie college bands from the Ateneo and live sports updates about the school teams.

Tina Campaña, Christel Boncan and Kara Mendoza, ADMU's official student correspondents, interview coaches and players and deliver pregame, halftime, and postgame radio reports from the game venues live on NU 107 during weekends.

"The strength of Halikinu Radio is its ability to help different members of the Ateneo community all at the same time," says Halili. "By producing radio segments and staging events with student organizations in the Ateneo, Halikinu Radio is able to raise funds that assist the Ateneo UAAP Juniors basketball team."

TINA Campaña, Kara Mendoza and Christel Boncan

Halikinu Radio is a combination rock-music and sports initiative that aims to showcase the different talents of Ateneo de Manila University students

"It's a more sustainable approach to raising and managing funds," he says. "We intend to keep up a year-long campaign which involves more events and perhaps get media coverage for other Ateneo varsity teams, like men's and women's football."

E-mail the author at bianca-consunji@yahoo.com

Meet the Halikinu radio girls

Kara Monica L. Mendoza, 20

3rd year, AB Communication

What made you try out for Halikinu radio, and what do you do for the program?

It combines three of my passions: talking and hosting, radio and basketball.

Radio: Christel and I are both junior jocks of Magic 89.9 so we both have radio background. I prefer listening to the radio more than my iPod!

Basketball: Aside from the fact that I've always been a listener of the Halikinu radio talk show, I've been watching the Blue Eagles since I was in high school (with my Atenean dad, cousins and uncles). I've been supporting the team even before I became Atenean! Plus some of the players are my friends, too.

Are you into basketball yourself, or any other sports?

No, I'm far from athletic! I can't play to save my life! But I wish I could!

What else do you do on your free time?

I'm an officer (batch representative) of the Ateneo Association of Communication majors, so I'm normally busy with projects and events. To de-stress, I go to the gym, the bookstore or the spa.

What are your best and worst experiences with the program?

One of the best perks for working for Halikinu Radio is the freebies! Nike has sponsored us and given us so much clothes! But the best part for me is the media pass! We don't have to worry about seats or sold-out tickets! We sit right in the middle of all the action.

Christina Michaela Bolinao Campaña, 20

4th year, AB Communication

What made you try out for Halikinu radio, and what do you do for the program?

I've done films, plays and hosting in the past, but I've never tried doing radio. It seemed like the perfect opportunity for me to learn something new and support my school at the same time. We basically report for all the games of the Ateneo Blue Eagles in the UAAP. Since there are three of us, we divide the work. One will report, another will write, and one will be the PR girl (she usually gets the interviews, contacts the radio station and informs them if we're about to call, etc.) We may have our own individual work to do during the games, but we still help each other out as much as we can. If we can help out with writing, getting the stats of the game or probably interview a celebrity, then we do so.

Are you into basketball yourself, or any other sports?

Yes, I am into basketball, but that's as far as watching the UAAP, supporting my school and getting to know the players. I'm not so much into the stats or any of the technical stuff... But I try to understand as much as I can whenever I watch the games. However, I do enjoy swimming, playing soccer and I am currently part of a flag football team.

What else do you do on your free time?

I try to enjoy my free time with my family, friends and boyfriend to sort of let loose and unwind during hell weeks in school. We go out, have lunch or dinner, watch a movie, then maybe have some drinks or go to school events. Of course, I have to allot some time for schoolwork and extracurricular activities for my org as well.

What are your best and worst experiences with the program?

So far, I've really enjoyed working for Halikinu Radio. It's so much fun watching the games live without having to compete for tickets, and getting to know the players up close. It's great how I can support my school in this way. The semi-celebrity status is also a huge perk, with all the freebies, meeting celebrities and getting the chance to experience the media even before I graduate. It helps a lot considering I'm a communication major and I learn about this in school. It's funny, though, because sometimes I still get so amazed with the way I sound on the radio because I'm doing everything for the first time. As for worst experiences, I wouldn't really say there are any. Of course, during reports, there are times when I make mistakes or get confused with what I'm supposed to say. It's also nerve-wracking whenever we're pressed for time and we need to get a report done. Sometimes we don't get to coordinate with the radio station and the report gets canceled but, aside from those small problems, we totally enjoy ourselves and make the most out of it.

Christel Marie D. Boncan, 20

4th year, AB Communication

What made you try out for Halikinu radio, and what do you do for the program?

I've been doing radio for a while (a little over a year) under the Junior Jock program of Magic 89.9 so I figured it would be a challenge and a change if I did sportscasting, hoping to eventually do TV hosting or something of that sort. For Halikinu radio, we cover the UAAP games of Ateneo. We do the work by rotation (reporter, writer and logistics—the one who interviews the players, coaches or celebrities who are watching the games, getting stats, contacts the DJ onboard, etc.)

Are you into basketball yourself, or any other sports?

I am a basketball fan but not a fanatic. I'd like to say I am a fan of the players, that's for sure. Haha. And yes, I am a fan of the sports I play (i.e. volleyball and flag football).

What else do you do on your free time?

During my free time (which I almost always never have), I like to watch movies, hang out with my friends, shop, play flag football (we have an ongoing league), read, listen to music, look at clothes and sneakers online, etc. I also like brainstorming for creative ideas for an events group I work with, Lady Styles.

What are your best and worst experiences with the program?

The best experiences I've had with the program are getting courtside view of the game and never having to worry about how and where to get tickets (because of our "golden" ID), getting to talk to the players, coaches or any other celebrity/personality we spot, and of course just reporting is a thrill for us already.

There hasn't been any real bad experience except that sometimes, when we get excited, we get jittery when we report but that doesn't happen very often so its all good. Other than that, it definitely makes our weekends more exciting.

ROOTING for Miriam College

Pooches at play

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Ryan Fernandez

FOR LESLIE AÑO, Karen Armas and Jo-an Raagas, making jerseys for dogs was a simple matter of combining their interests. They had all been teammates on Miriam College's varsity basketball team, and all had dogs of their own, which they loved dressing in all sorts of outfits.

However, the group wasn't too happy with the outfits available at dog specialty stores. Finding them overly frilly and cutesy, the athletic bunch decided to come out with their own line of clothing for dogs that reflected their own sensibilities.

Año, Armas and Raagas then decided to partner with college friend Cris Seratto and came up with Fabpups, a line of clothing devoted to dogs. Aside from the typical frilly outfits that are usually associated with small toy dogs, the group produced a line of jerseys suitable for more active dogs and their owners.

"We didn't like the designs we saw in the stores," Año said. "So we decided to produce our own stuff, and jerseys were a natural choice since we had all played basketball together."

As of now, they don't have all the UAAP school jerseys. Admitting to a personal bias, the group has jerseys in the school colors of alma mater Miriam College, and of University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, UA&P, and some US basketball teams. However, they are coming out with more designs in the near future

Fabpups is also coming out with statement shirts and matching shirts for the dog and owner.

Talk about sharing the schoo spirit—now, even your dog ca root for your team of choice Plus, you don't have to dres your tough-looking bulldog in ruffled dress anymore.

Contact Fabpups at fab pups@yahoo.com, http://fab pups.multiply.com, or 0916 2012585 or 0916-2702063

E-mail the author at bianc consunji@yahoo.com

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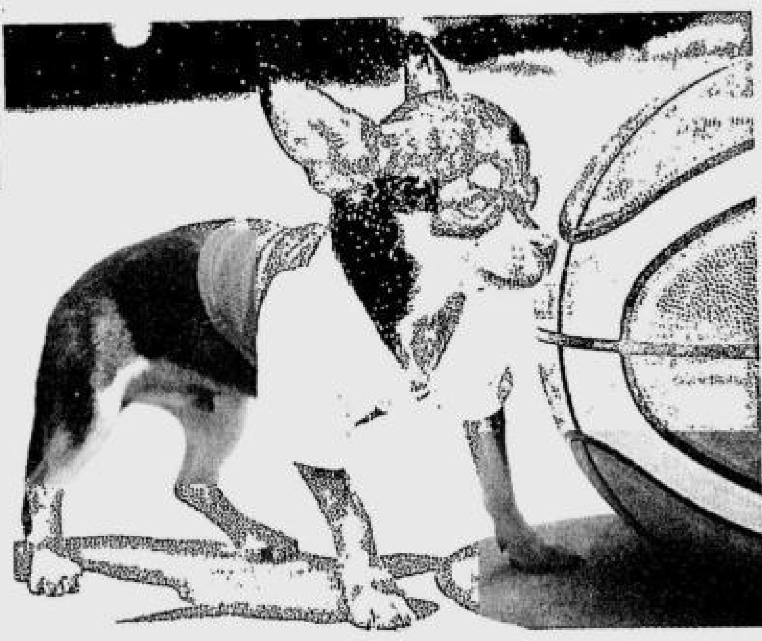
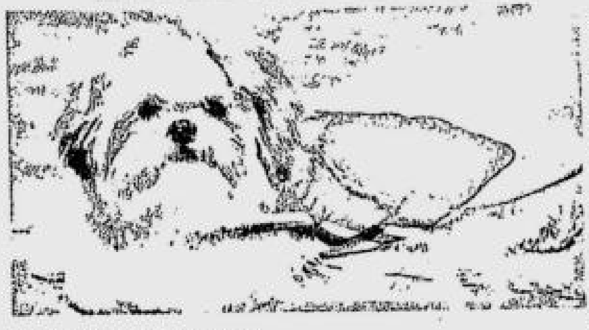


EVERY bit of support helps, even from the dogs.



RESPLENDENT in red

FAMOUS Ateneo-La Salle rivalry extends to the pets.

UNIVERSITY of the Philippines supporter

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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'Shaider' times 3

Dennis, Marky and Aljur top-bill GMA 7's 'Zaido'

NEW TV heroes (from left) Marky Cielo, Dennis Trillo ad Aljur Abrenica get ready for promo snaps.

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

GMA 7 HAS FOUND three new super heroes in Dennis Trillo, Marky Cielo and Aljur Abrenica, who are donning the sleek spandex costumes of Zaido—the Pinoy Shaider.

The new prime time series "Zaido" is based on the Japanese live-action series "Shaider," which ran from 1984 to '85.

"Shaider" is part of the "Metal Heroes" genre. Dennis is the Blue Zaido; Marky, Green; and Aljur, Red.

Other cast members are Lorna Tolentino, Tirso Cruz III, Raymart Santiago, Jay Manalo, Ian de Leon, Diana Zubiri, Lovi, and Kris Bernal as Amy.

Diana and Karel are Dennis' partners on the show.

When INQUIRER Entertainment caught up with Dennis, he had been taping "Zaido" and the afternoon soap "Kung Mahawi Man ang Ulap" back-to-back for five days straight.

After a short nap, Dennis was again on the road.

"I'm on my way to Laguna, to shoot a *perya* (carnival) scene for 'Zaido,'" he related. "We haven't done major fight scenes yet. But we've been training regularly."

Aljur has been going to the gym at least once a week, "Dennis said.

Aljur added: "The three of us had the chance to bond during our martial-arts and motorbike training."

It was Marky's first motorbike ride. "It

'SHAIDER'/ E3

ABC 5: 'RP Idol is ours'

Bobby Barreiro insists his network will continue producing the reality talent search

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

REACTING TO THE INQUIRER ENTERtainment story, "GMA 7 eyes RP 'Idol,'" ABC 5 managing director Bobby Barreiro asserted that his network is mounting Season 2 of "Philippine Idol," "barring any major glitch."

Barreiro confirmed that ABC 5 is still deep into negotiations on the deal with "Idol" franchise holder FremantleMedia, but added that there is no indication that the show would be given to another network.

"Fremantle people are very professional. They're long-term players. They won't burn bridges just because there's a better offer from another network," Barreiro told INQUIRER Entertainment in a phone interview on Monday.

He said that the final decision rests on ABC 5 president and chief executive officer Tonyboy Cojuangco and Fremantle.

"Mr. Cojuangco is just waiting for the terms of the contract to be finalized. He's very interested in the show," Barreiro declared. "For as long as the terms are reasonable, we'll push through with it."

Barreiro expressed surprise though that GMA 7 is now eyeing the RP "Idol" franchise. "Perhaps this proves that franchises work and is changing the local TV landscape. There is nothing bad with foreign formats. It's just a matter of infusing it with local flavor. Franchises allow us to learn from the best practitioners in the world."

ABC 5/ E2

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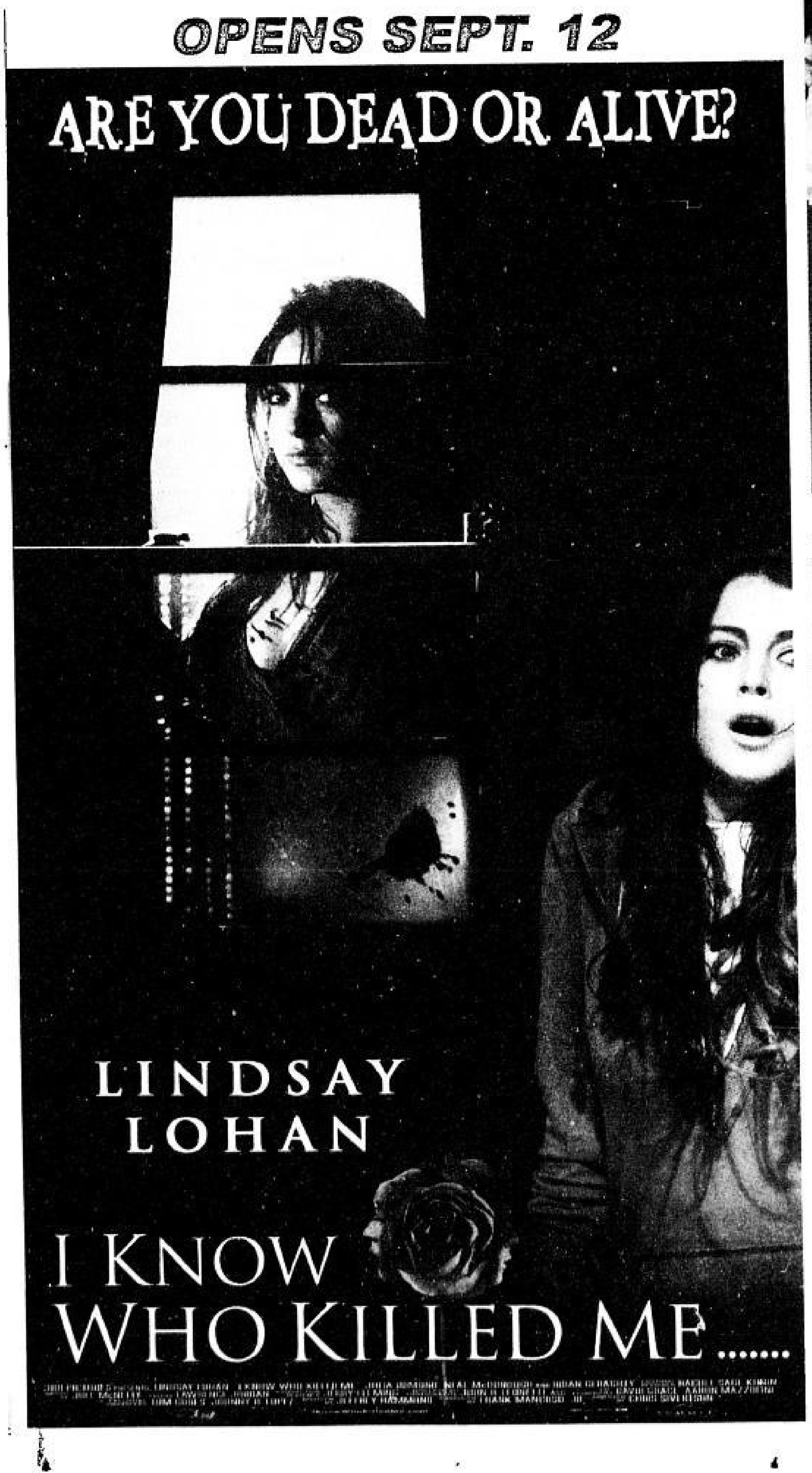
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DAY WATCH
FROM THE VISIONARY FORCE BEHIND 'NIGHT WATCH'
GRAND OPENING TODAY

ABC 5 . . .

From page E1

He revealed out that ABC 5 is gearing up for "Asian Idol," earmarked as a "big launch" for RP "Idol" Season 2.

Local champ Mau Marcelo is the country's representative at the Asian showdown in Jakarta, Indonesia, in November.

"Seven Asian countries have 'Idol' franchises—Indonesia, India, Kazakhstan, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines. RTTI [channel] in Indonesia is hosting the regional competition; Fremantle is coordinating with the different countries," Barreiro said.

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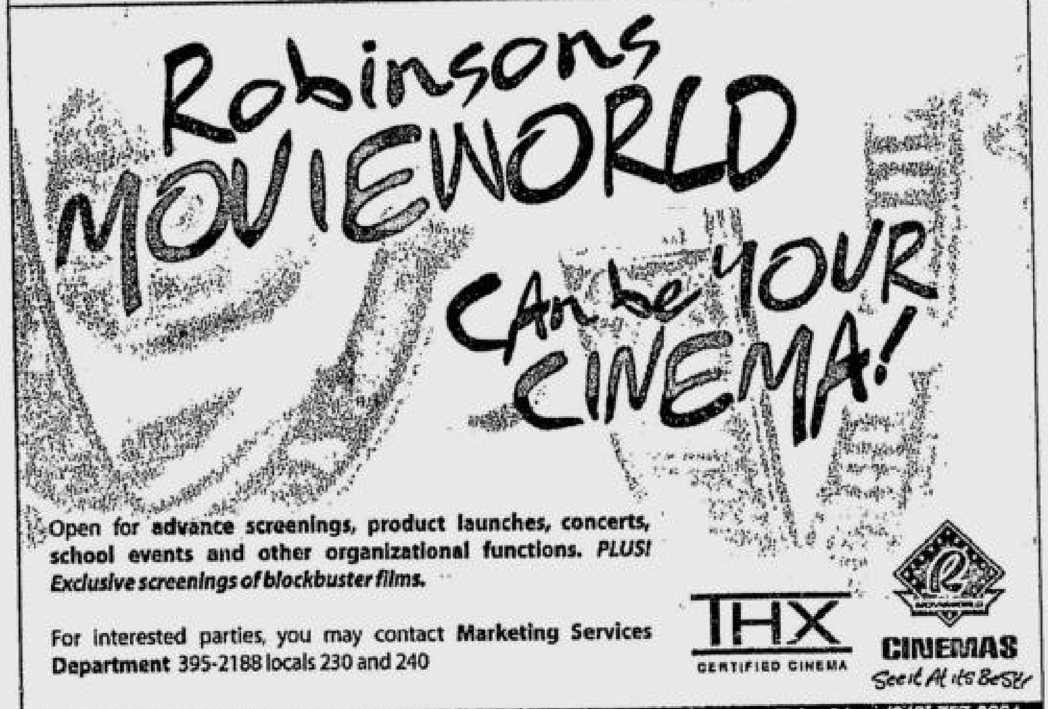

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4 EVAN ALMIGHTY

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2 BLIND DATING
3 THREE
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2 A LOVE STORY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 THREE

ANGELES

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1 RISE
2 SINKING of JAPAN
3 CASA
4 THE INVASION

TARLAC

1 A LOVE STORY
2 LICENSE to WED
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY

STARMILLS

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2 SINKING of JAPAN
3 A LOVE STORY
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
5 1408
6 RUSH HOUR 3

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Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

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2 BLIND DATING
3 A LOVE STORY
4 THREE
5 BORDERTOWN
6 CASA

ILOILO

Ticket Price: P70.50 / P80.50 (033) 336 8070

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2 THE INVASION
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 A LOVE STORY
5 HAIRSPRAY
6 CASA

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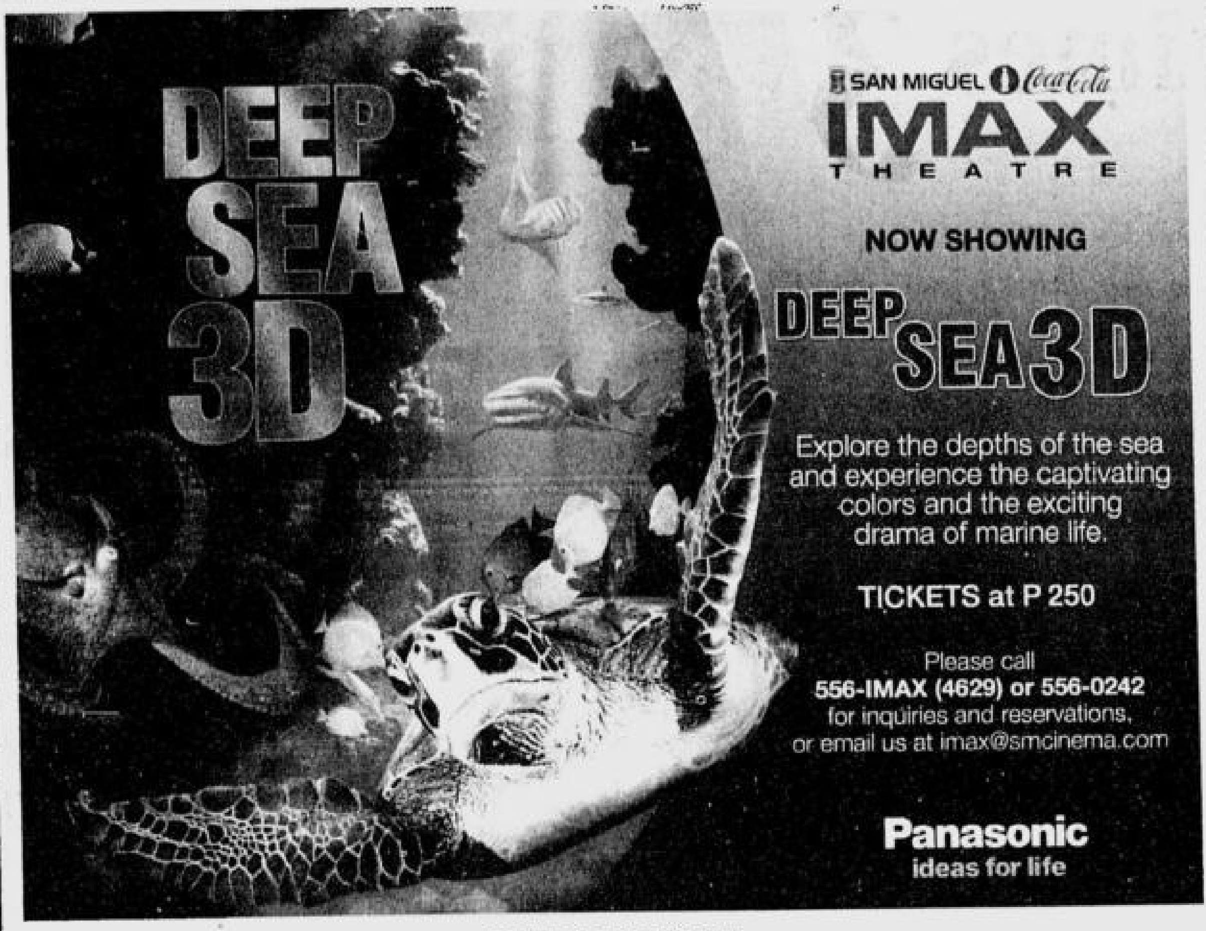

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9 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
10 CHOPSUEY
11 1408
12 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

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1 DAY WATCH
2 NANCY DREW
3 1408
4 DISTURBIA
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
6 SKINWALKERS
7 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
8 INVASION
9 CHOPSUEY
10 A LOVE STORY
11 RUSH HOUR 3
12 GANDHI, MY FATHER

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1 INVASION
2 NANCY DREW
3 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
4 SKINWALKERS
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 LAST LEGION
7 1408
8 A LOVE STORY
9 EVAN ALMIGHTY
10 RUSH HOUR 3
11 DISTURBIA
12 CHOPSUEY

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1 DISTURBIA
2 1408
3 NANCY DREW
4 SKINWALKERS
5 A LOVE STORY
6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
7 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
8 CHOPSUEY
9 RUSH HOUR 3
10 LAST LEGION

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 1408
2 DISTURBIA
3 SKINWALKER
4 NANCY DREW
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 A LOVE STORY

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 DISTURBIA
2 NANCY DREW
3 1408
4 DAY WATCH
5 A LOVE STORY
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
7 EVAN ALMIGHTY
8 SKINWALKERS
9 CHOPSUEY

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 DISTURBIA
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 1408
4 SKINWALKERS

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 DISTURBIA
3 CHOPSUEY
4 1408
5 NANCY DREW
6 SKINWALKERS
7 RUSH HOUR 3
8 LAST LEGION
9 A LOVE STORY
10 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
11 DAY WATCH
12 EVAN ALMIGHTY

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
2 INVASION
3 BLADES OF GLORY
4 1408

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1 1408
2 SKINWALKERS
3 INVASION
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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1 1408
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 SKINWALKERS
4 DISTURBIA

LUZON

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1 SKINWALKERS
2 CHOPSUEY
3 1408
4 A LOVE STORY
5 LAST LEGION
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
7 EVAN ALMIGHTY
8 RUSH HOUR 3

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1 1408
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 RISE
4 OSS 117/A LOVE STORY
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 SINKING OF JAPAN

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1 LICENSE TO WED
2 SIGNOS
3 A LOVE STORY
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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1 RISE
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 A LOVE STORY
4 SINKING OF JAPAN

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1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 RISE
3 NANCY DREW
4 SINKING OF JAPAN
5 A LOVE STORY
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 RISE
3 A LOVE STORY
4 HAIRSPRAY

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2 A LOVE STORY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 RUSH HOUR 3

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1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RISE
4 1408

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1 DAY WATCH
2 SKINWALKERS
3 DISTURBIA
4 NANCY DREW

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2 NEXT
3 SIGNOS
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 PLANET TERROR
3 A LOVE STORY
4 SIGNOS
5 RISE
6 RUSH HOUR 3

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1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 BORDER TOWN
3 SIGNOS
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 HAIRSPRAY
2 RESERVED
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 A LOVE STORY
5 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
7 RESERVED
8 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 RISE
4 BLIND DATING
5 CHOPSUEY
6 INVASION
7 A LOVE STORY
8 PLANET TERROR

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1 BLADES OF GLORY
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY
4 BORDERTOWN

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'Shaider' times 3

From page E1

was addicting," he said. "On my last spin, though, I fell!"

Dennis is excited that he gets to use a laser sword and gun, and do acrobatic stunts on a harness.

The award-winning actor was an avid fan of "Shaider" when it first aired on IBC-13.

"I really enjoyed the stunts," he recalled. "And the story was ahead of its time. I was amazed by the gigantic robots fighting with the monsters."

For the Pinoy version, Dennis said the network's production team had "reinvented and modernized" the Shaider saga.

"We want viewers to find it exciting and unpredictable," he said.

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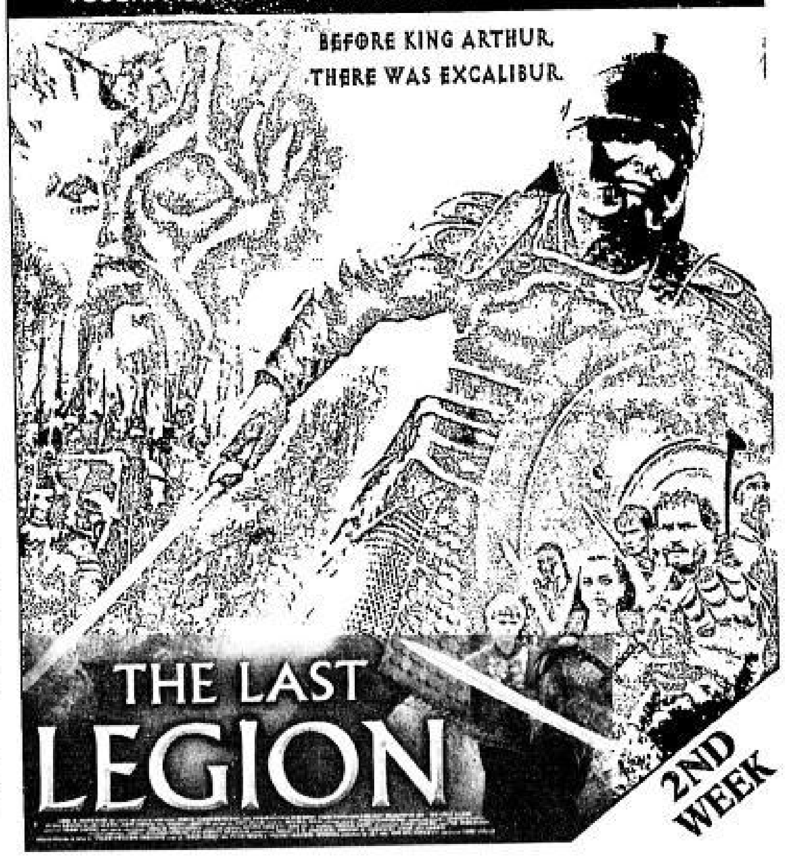

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1	DAY WATCH	12:00, 2:30, 5:25, 8:20, 11:10	R-18
2	DISTURBIA	1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00	PG-13
3	NANCY DREW	1:00, 3:20, 5:50, 8:20, 10:50	G
4	INVASION	3:20, 8:10	PG-13
4	1408	1:00, 5:45, 10:40	PG-13

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NANCY DREW	12:15 / 2:35 / 4:55 / 7:15 / 9:50
DAY WATCH	1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20
LAST LEGION	2:35 / 7:15
1408	12:15 / 4:55 / 9:50
SKINWALKERS	1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30
CHOPSUEY	12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40
THE INVASION	1:10 / 5:30 / 9:50
WAITRESS	1:50 / 4:30 / 7:10 / 9:50
A LOVE STORY	1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40
EVAN ALMIGHTY	3:20 / 7:40
NANCY DREW	2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00

Ali MALL 5

1	DISTURBIA	11:40 / 1:55 / 4:10 / 6:25 / 8:40
2	A LOVE STORY	12:20 / 3:00 / 5:40 / 6:20
3	NANCY DREW	1:05 / 3:25 / 5:45 / 8:05
4	CHOPSUEY	12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30
5	SKINWALKERS	12:45 / 3:25 / 6:05 / 8:45

DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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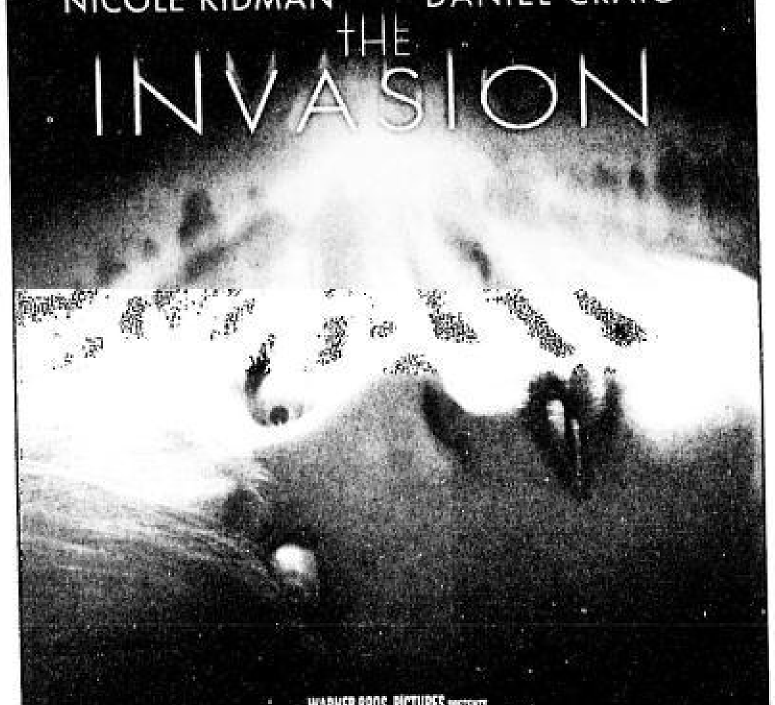
- Jeffrey Lyles, Gazette (MD)

NICOLE KIDMAN DANIEL CRAIG



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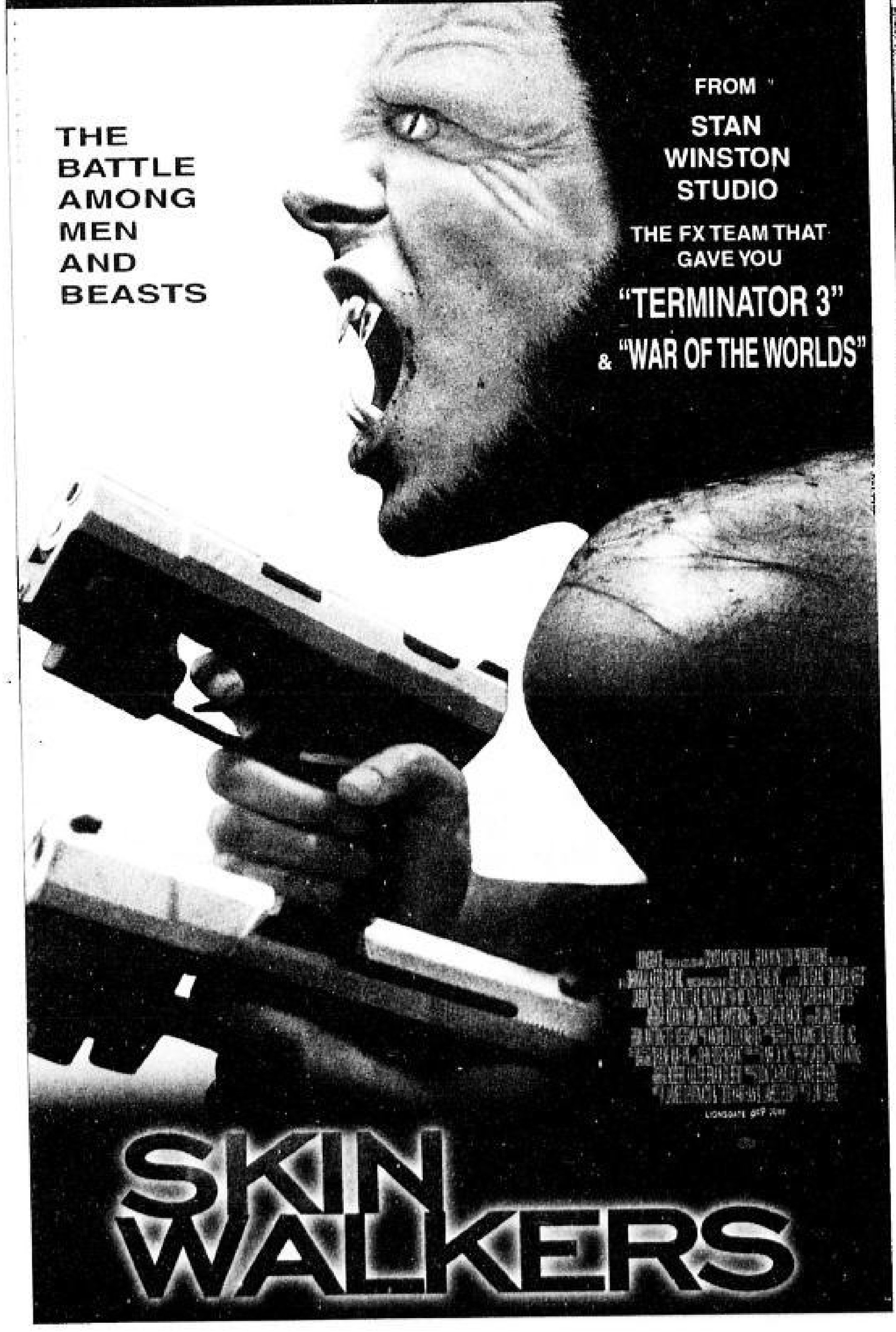

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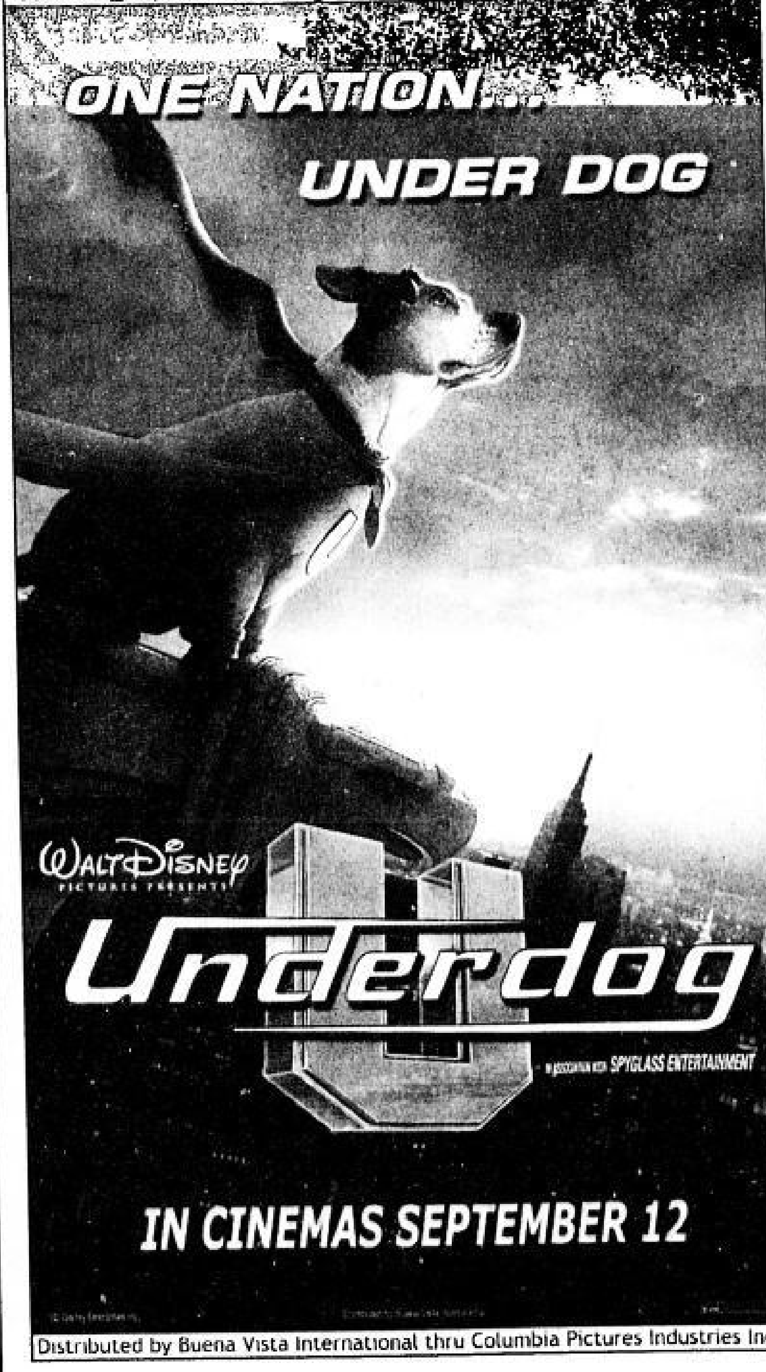
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1 (DOLBY)	NANCY DREW
2 (DOLBY)	DISTRUBIA
3 (DOLBY)	NANCY DREW
4 (DOLBY)	DAY WATCH

PREMIERE

(DOLBY)	EVAN ALMIGHTY HAIRSPRAY

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1	THE INVASION
2	DISTURBIA
3	NANCY DREW
4	SKINWALKERS

starmall
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3	LAST LEGION
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	BOURNE ULTIMATUM
5	RESERVED

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994

1	A LOVE STORY
2	DISTURBIA
3	DAY WATCH
4	SKINWALKERS

THEATRES
Tel (044) 600-2025

1	EVAN ALMIGHTY
2	MY KUYAS WEDDING
3	LICCENSE TO WED

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Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271

1	EVAN ALMIGHTY
2	MY KUYAS WEDDING
3	RESERVED
4	RESERVED

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(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	1408
2 (SDDS)	SKINWALKERS
3 (DTS)	DAY WATCH
4 GOLD (DTS)	THE INVASION
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	NANCY DREW
6 GOLD (SDDS)	EVAN ALMIGHTY
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	DISTURBIA
8 (IMAX)	MY KUYAS WEDDING
9	A LOVE STORY
10	CHOPSUEY

Blue Wave MARIKINA
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1 (DOLBY)	CHOPSUEY
2 (DOLBY)	DISTURBIA
3 (DOLBY)	NANCY DREW
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4	SKINWALKERS
5	DAY WATCH

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1	EVAN ALMIGHTY
2	RUSH HOUR - 3
3	A LOVE STORY
4	DIN'T LOOK BACK

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	SKINWALKERS
2	DISTURBIA
3	MY KUYAS WEDDING

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1	RUSH HOUR - 3
2	PLANET TERROR

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	RISE
2	MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 (DTS EX)	SINKING JAPAN
4	THREE

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	RUSH HOUR - 3
2	MY KUYAS WEDDING

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	DAY WATCH
2 (DOLBY)	DISTURBIA
3 (DOLBY)	NANCY DREW
4 (DOLBY)	1408 / THE INVATION

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Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 (DTS)	RISE
3 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR - 3
4	

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1	RESERVED
2 (DOLBY)	RESERVED
3 (DTS)	RESERVED
4	RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	EVAN ALMIGHTY
2	MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR - 3

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	MY KUYAS WEDDING
2	EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR - 3
4 (DTS)	SINKING JAPAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.1320

1	MY KUYAS WEDDING
2	RISE
3 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR - 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1	MY KUYAS WEDDING
2	RUSH HOUR - 3

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1	RUSH HOUR - 3
2	PLEASE CALL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	THE INVATION
2	MASARAP NA PUGAD
3	PLEASE CALL
4 (DTS)	RUSH HOUR - 3

Lianas MovieCity
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2	PLEASE CALL
3 (DTS)	RISE
4	PLEASE CALL
5	RUSH HOUR - 3

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	MY KUYAS WEDDING
2	RUSH HOUR - 3
3	A LOVE STORY
4	EVAN ALMIGHTY

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.202

1	PLEASE CALL
2	PLEASE CALL

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Rock stars recall Summer of Love '67

SAN FRANCISCO—SOME OF the biggest musical stars of the 1960s counterculture gathered here on Sunday for a concert to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Summer of Love, yet backstage many voiced disappointment about the era's unfulfilled ideals.

The Summer of Love of 1967 made San Francisco a magnet for youth who wanted to experiment with sex, drugs, rock and roll and the hippie lifestyle.

"We thought, this is it, we're going to change the world, actually we're going to become the Christian world of love," Ray Manzarek, 68, keyboardist for The Doors, told Reuters. "Of course, it didn't happen."

The January 1967 "Human Be-In" was credited with drawing young people to the city.

The '60s lived again as Manzarek, Jefferson Starship and other legends performed; thousands of fans donned tie-dye

ROCK/E5

SHANG CINEPLEX
① NANCY DREW MTRCB. GP 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
② DISTURBIA MTRCB PG-13 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00
③ NANCY DREW MTRCB: GP 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
④ DAY WATCH MTRCB. R-13 1:20, 4:10, 7:05, 10:00
PREMIERE THEATRE EVAN ALMIGHTY (GP) 1:20, 3:30 / HAIRSPRAY (GP) 6:00, 8:30
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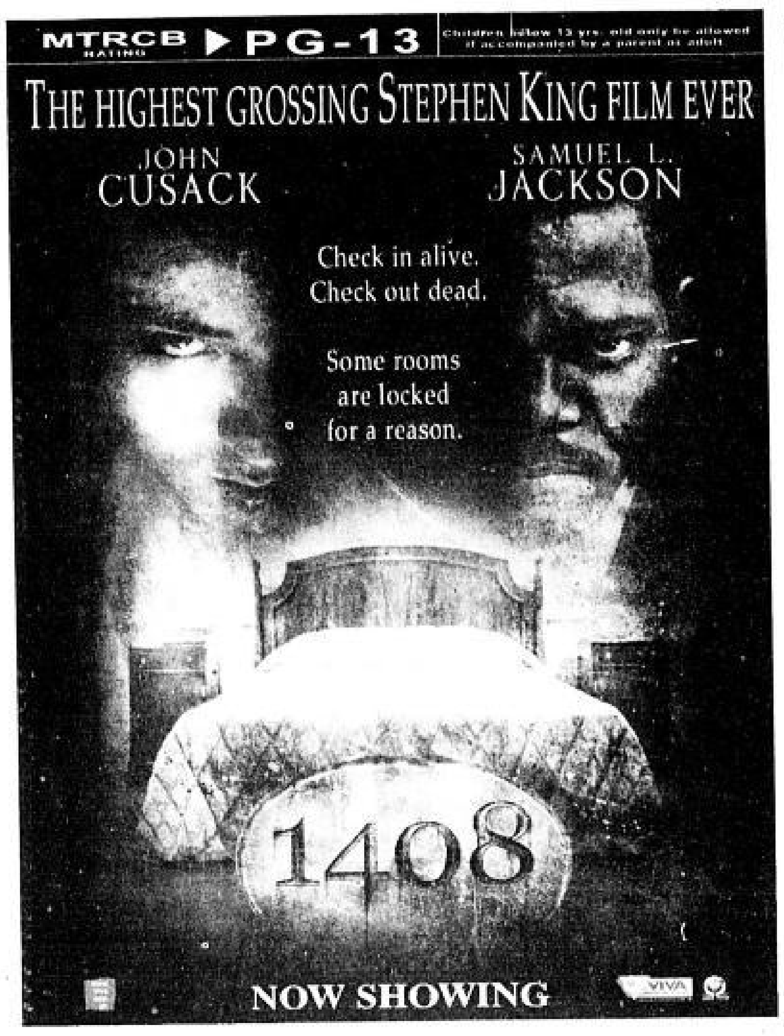
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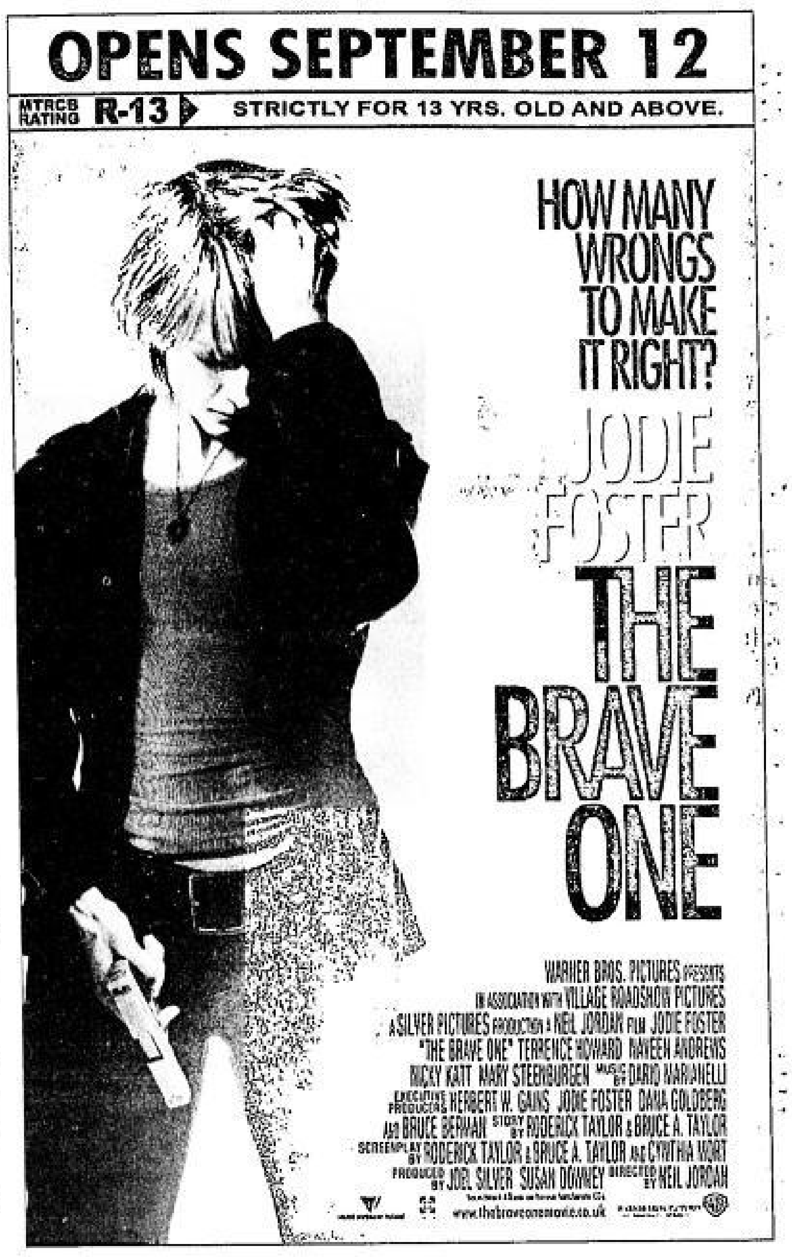
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GLORIETTA 4	1 DAYWATCH	2 SKINWALKERS	3 THX DISTURBIA GUARANTEED SEATS	4 ARE WE DONE YET?	5 THE INVASION	6 NANCY DREW	7 1408
GREENBELT 1	1 DAYWATCH	2 NANCY DREW					
GREENBELT 3	1 THX NANCY DREW GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX DISTURBIA GUARANTEED SEATS	3 HAIRSPRAY GUARANTEED SEATS	4 EVAN ALMIGHTY GUARANTEED SEATS	5 DAYWATCH GUARANTEED SEATS		
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX DISTURBIA	2 NANCY DREW	3 DAYWATCH	4 THE INVASION	5 SKINWALKERS		
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 PAN'S LABYRINTH	2 PLANET TERROR	3 RISE	4 THE INVASION			
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Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000
Ayala

glorietta	Philippine Daily Inquirer's Job Fair September 3 to 5, 2007 at the Activity Center
GREENBELT	Sounds of Greenbelt featuring: Bloomfields September 6, 2007 at the Greenbelt 3 Park
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Anson's Exhibit September 1 to 16, 2007 at the Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Elliot Yamin of American Idol Live! September 26; 6 PM; OnStage (Cinema 1)
MARKET! MARKET!	Lactum Mall Show September 8 & 9, 2007 at the Activity Center
Greenbelt 1 Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	Antiqueños: Homage to my Kasimanwas August 28 to September 10, 2007 For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Samsung Exhibit An exhibit of the latest Samsung mobile phones September 14 to 16; 10am to 9 pm; Starbucks / Food Choices Level 2

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glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

A LARGE crowd dances to the music during the "Summer of Love" 40th anniversary concert at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, California on Sept. 2. REUTERS

Rock stars recall . . .

From page E4

shirts and bell bottom pants and the smell of marijuana wafted through the air.

Two women wandered through the crowd in Golden Gate Park offering free hugs.

In keeping with the spirit of those times, the concert was free.

Betrayed

In the '60s, many in the counterculture felt they could change the world by removing societal constraints and ending the Vietnam War.

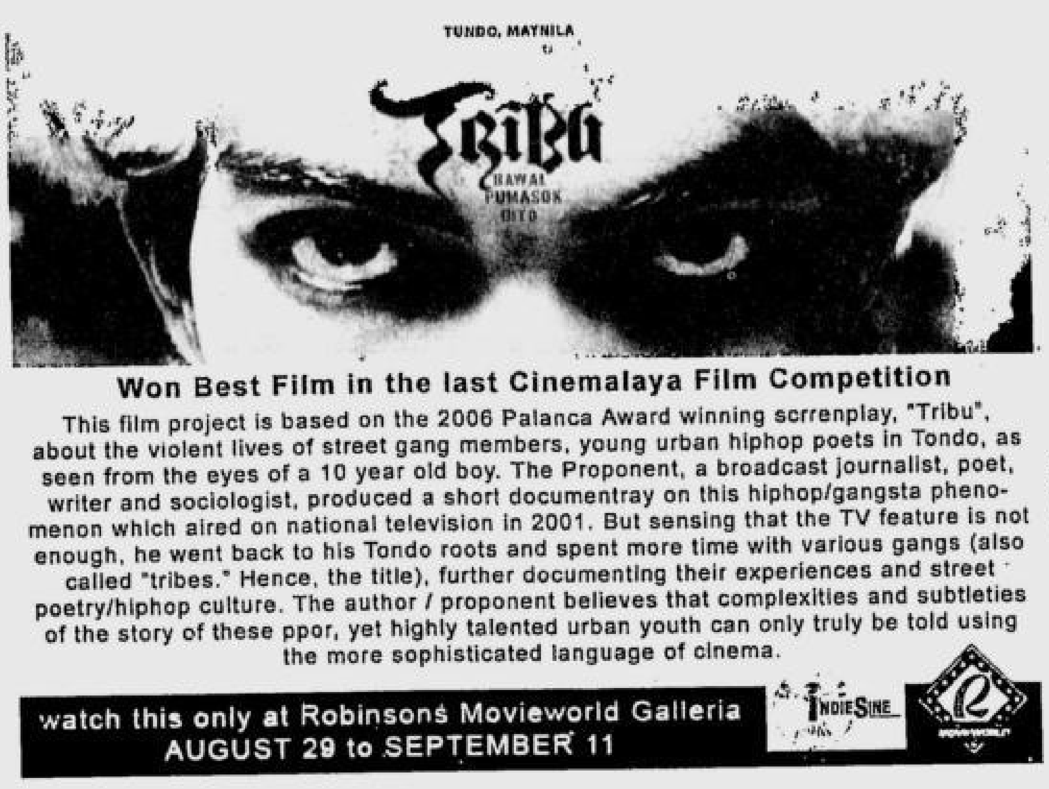
Fito De La Parra, drummer for the band Canned Heat, said his generation never lived up to its ideals.

"On the whole, I feel betrayed," he said backstage after playing before what organizers estimated was 40,000 fans.

Off-base

James Gurley, 67, played with Big Brother and the Holding Company, whose lead singer Janis Joplin died of a drug overdose. "My disappointment is in myself," he said. "My assessments were off-base; I mis-assessed human nature."

Reuters



TUNDO, MAYNILA
Tribu
BAWAL PUMASOK DITO
Won Best Film in the last Cinemalaya Film Competition
This film project is based on the 2006 Palanca Award winning scrrenplay, "Tribu", about the violent lives of street gang members, young urban hiphop poets in Tondo, as seen from the eyes of a 10 year old boy. The Proponent, a broadcast journalist, poet, writer and sociologist, produced a short documentray on this hiphop/gangsta phenomenon which aired on national television in 2001. But sensing that the TV feature is not enough, he went back to his Tondo roots and spent more time with various gangs (also called "tribes." Hence, the title), further documenting their experiences and street poetry/hiphop culture. The author / proponent believes that complexities and subtleties of the story of these ppor, yet highly talented urban youth can only truly be told using the more sophisticated language of cinema.
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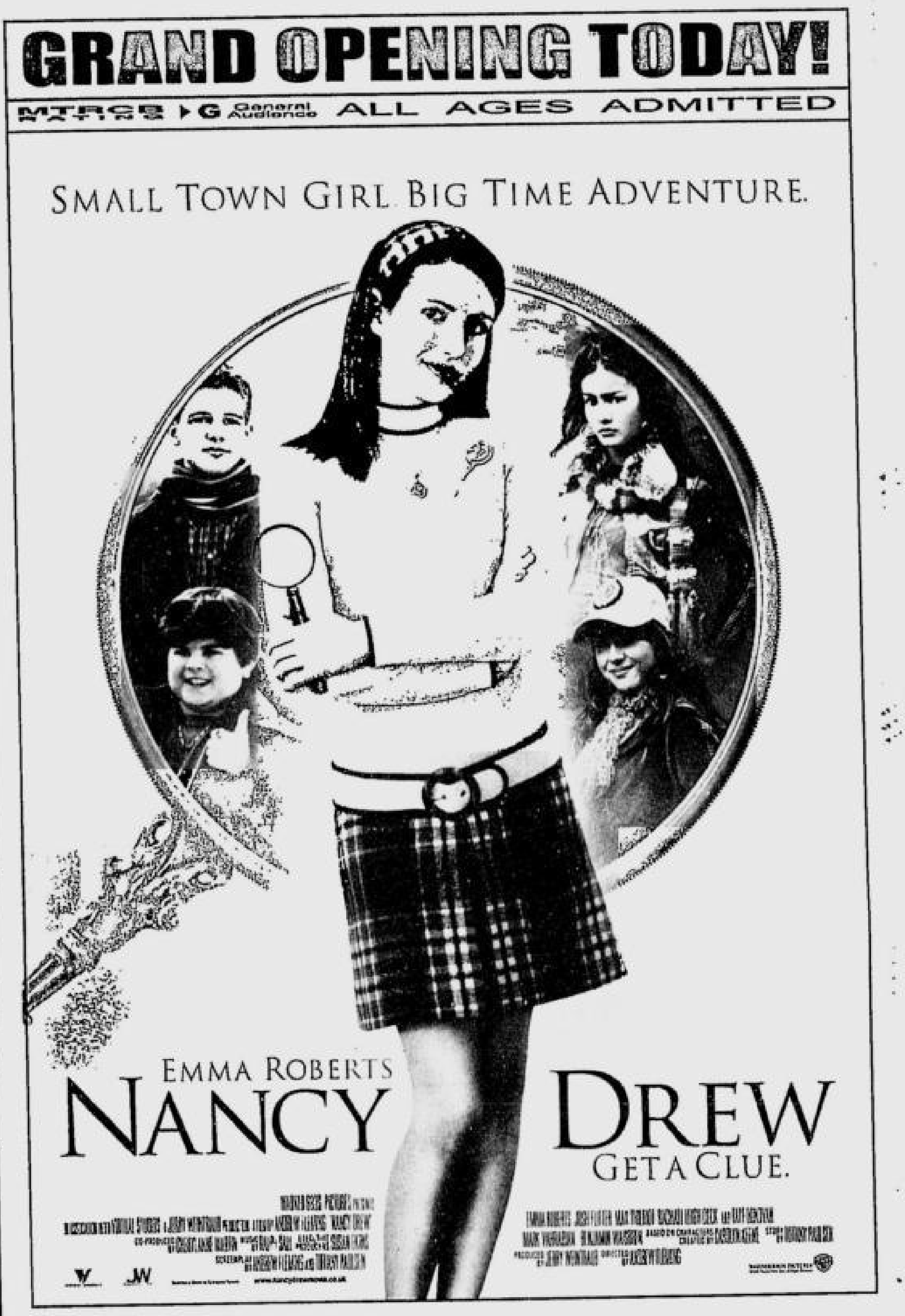

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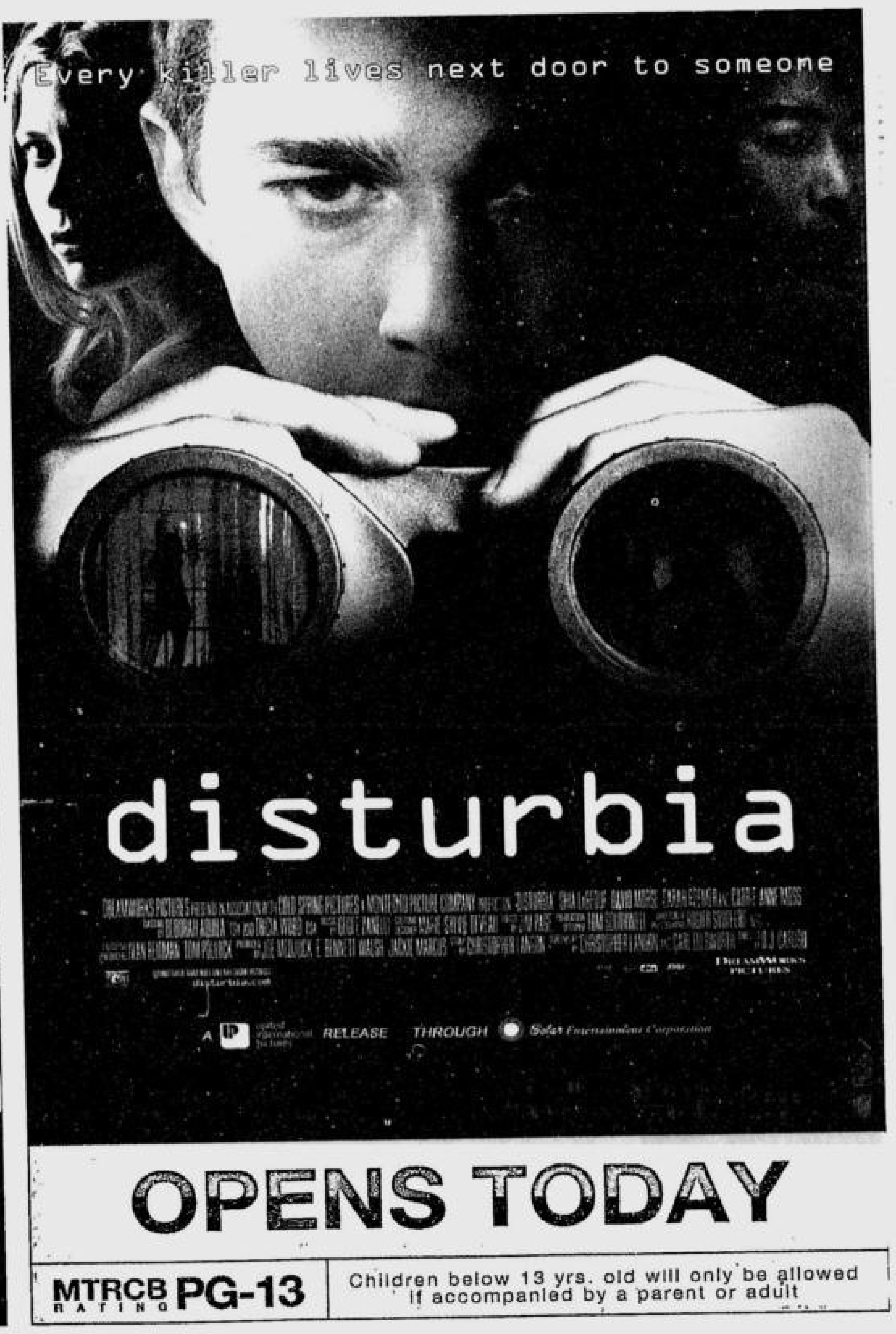

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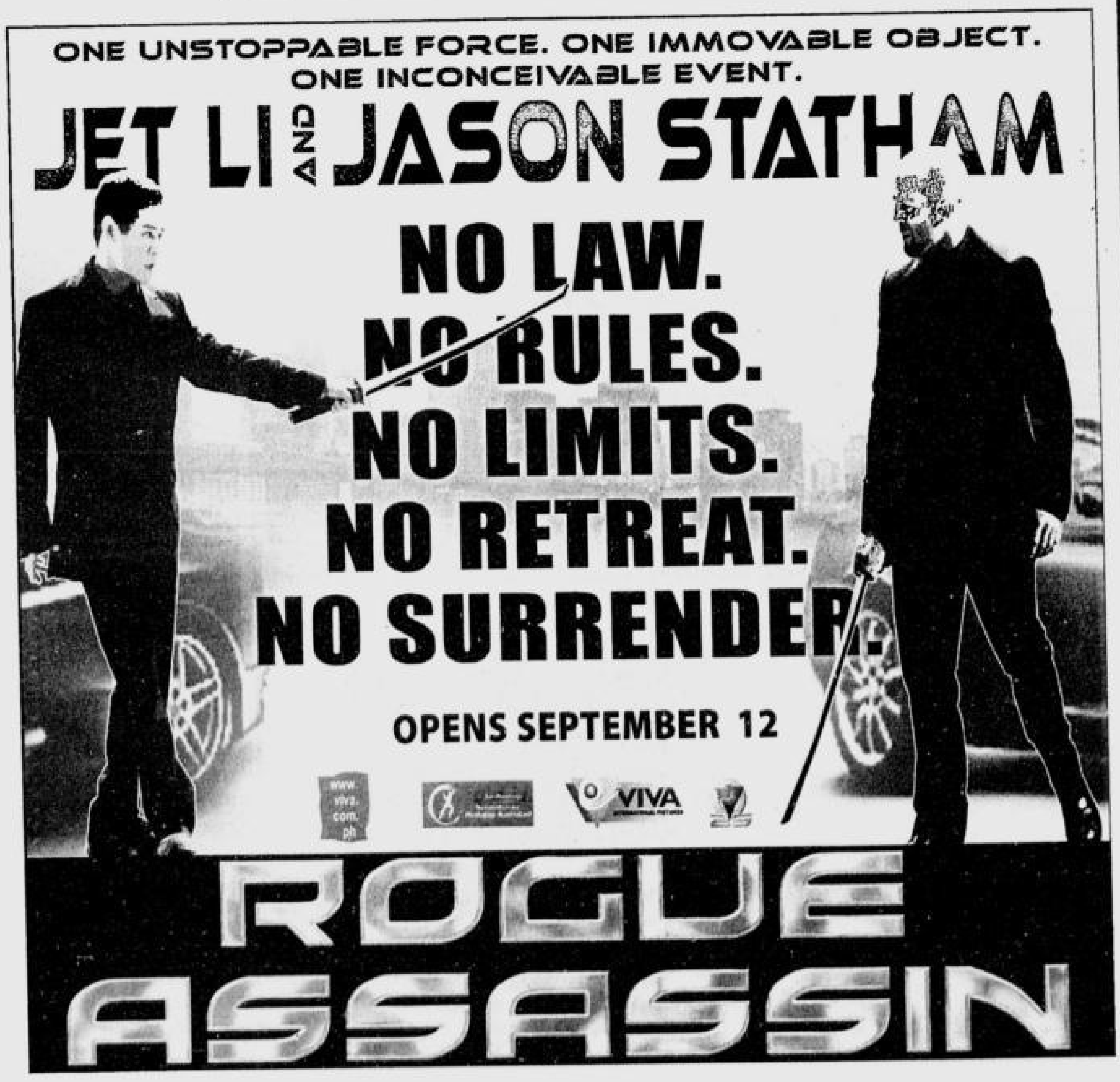

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Careful what you say when the mic's on—always

By the Inquirer/INQUIRER.net Entertainment Staff

GMA 7'S "STAR TALK" AIRED A BLIND item on a "wholesome" male star whom the network is grooming as a matinee hero. The heartthrob reportedly complained to a friend of his hectic schedule, using language that would make chief censor Marissa Laguardia blush. Unknown to the guy, his lapel mic was on!

ALJUR Abrenica and Kris Bernal

Another foul-mouth

This other heartthrob's was costly. Between takes, he relished badmouthing the director. Alas, during one such tirade, his lapel mic was on, too, and everyone in the OB van, including the director, heard every tawdry detail. Direk confronted the erring actor, who ended up jobless, of course and, not surprisingly, banned for life from the director's projects.

THAT'S Brad's hand on Angelina's back, at the Venice Film Festival. REUTERS

Two-second delay

This actress has always been rumored as a bit, uh, dense. Unfortunately, she has to grant TV interviews left and right, to spice up her bland career. Someone's noticed that she's a bit slow in fielding questions—"as if her brain is on auto two-second delay."

Coosome two

Kris Bernal was being groomed as the *ka*-love team of fellow talent-search champ Mart Escudero. Now that Mart is being linked with newbie Jennica Garcia (more popularly known as Jean Garcia's teen daughter), Kris has found a new partner in another "Starstruck" idol—Aljur Abrenica. Kris and Aljur were spotted being extra affectionate with each other on the "Zaido" set. Check out the snaps.

Papa Pitt

VENICE, Italy—Brad Pitt says fatherhood is a lot of fun. Pitt and Jolie, children in tow, came to Venice to promote his new film about Western outlaw Jesse James, which is competing at the lagoon city's film festival for the Golden Lion award. They have one child of their own, and three that Jolie adopted internationally. Asked by Italian state TV if they were ready for a fifth child, Pitt replied quickly, "Yeah, we're ready. [Fatherhood] is the most fun I've ever had and also the biggest pain in the ass." *AP*

Gere: Boycott Olympics

NEW YORK—Richard Gere is pressing for a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Gere, 58, chair of the International Campaign for Tibet, told Reuters: "A general boycott to me certainly has value; it's probably impractical, but emotionally absolutely makes sense. Why should the world reward people who are obviously so bad to their own people, so bad to other people?"

RUSHES

LORNA Tolentino: No more sexy stuff.

Cover up, girl

KUALA LUMPUR—Beyonce is due to play in Muslim-majority Malaysia in November, but will have to tone down her midriff-flaunting tops and thigh-skimming skirts, the New Straits Times newspaper reported. *AFP*

Breakdown Lee

HONG KONG—Oscar-winning director Ang Lee says filming the sex scenes in his new spy thriller "Lust, Caution" nearly caused him a mental breakdown. Lee was also quoted by the Apple Daily newspaper as saying he spent tremendous effort training actress Tang Wei. "Eight months," Lee said. "I had never spent so much effort on one person." *AP*

***

Top of the Talk Shows

For those who missed last weekend's show biz talk programs on TV. (And why we are moved, if we are moved.)

- Meryll Soriano on her relationship with Bernard Palanca after giving birth to their son Elijah: "*Nag-usap naman kami. Natutuwa siya siyempre; tatay na siya. Alam namin ang responsibilidad namin* as parents—we'll take it from there."
- Dennis Trillo on rumors he is the father of beauty queen Carlene Aguilar's soon-to-be first born: "*Hindi natin maiiwasan ang mga taong mag-isip nang ganoon. Nilinaw na 'yun dati; tapos na 'yun.*"
- Vina Morales on her relationship with businessman Cedric Lee: "I'd rather not talk about it. *Mas maganda 'yung tahimik muna, kasi marami tayong pinoprotektahan na ... ibang tao..*"
- Martin Nievera, "ambushed" about ex-wife Pops Fernandez: "Ok. Goodbye. Let's go." (A tongue-tied Martin! Wonders never cease.)
- Karylle spotted without boyfriend Dingdong Dantes at Ogie Alcasid's birthday party: "*Basta masaya kami... at mas lalo ko siyang minahal.*" (Yes, we love men who give their girlfriends space—but not too much.)

MAMA Meryll

- Regine Velasquez on Michelle van Eimeren's message accepting her into her life and family: "I'm so happy that finally we're out." (*Kami rin, happy. Tapos na 'yan ha?*)
- Wilma Galvante on Ai-Ai delas Alas' aborted attempt to return to GMA 7: "*Nanghihingi siya ng* project *kasi wala daw siyang* show. Now that she has projects again, good for her." (*Mmmmedyo galit yata?*)
- Lorna Tolentino on a sexy men's magazine's offer to have her on its cover: "*'Wag na sana. Pinag-daanan ko na ang magpa-sexy-sexy.*" (Good call.)

Surprise?

- Joey de Leon asked if he was mad at Willie Revillame: "*Ako nga'y nagulat at galit na galit siya, eh. Kung mapapansin niyo ... eh dinadaan ko sa biro ... dahil hindi naman away eh. Nagulat ako, bakit ako ang pinagtuunan ng galit.*" (*Sino pa'ng nagulat?* Show of hands, please.)
- Joey de Leon on Willie Revillame's character: "*Huwag kang magagalit pare, ha? Alam mo totoong may kayabangan ka eh ... Ako kunwari may sinabi akong, 'O dito sa show namin walang daya' ... Nag-*react *siya kaagad. Parang siya lang ang mandaraya sa buong mundo. ... Siya agad, 'Ako 'yan, ako 'yan, ako 'yung mandarayang 'yan. Ganoon ang yabang, eh. Bawasan mo pare.*" (*Tingin namin, walang nagulat.*)
- MTRCB chair Consoliza Laguardia on the Willie-Joey spat: "*Iniidolo sila ng madla. Sayang kung dahil lang sa mga simpleng bagay na ganyan eh, mapu-*pull down *sila pareho. 'Yun lang.*" (Actually, ma'am, *parang hindi 'yun lang.*)
- Willie Revillame after meeting with Laguardia: "*Maraming salamat sa mga payo niyo sa akin at susundin ko po 'yun. Pasensiya na po kung naging* emotional *ako ... Sa araw-araw po kasi ... siyempre sa pagod at lahat na po nadadala minsan ... Pero magmula po ngayon,* open *na ako.*" (Something lacking here?)
- Vic Sotto on the alleged cheating and the resulting word war: "*Ang problema, sinasantabi nila eh. Inaalis nila 'yung atensyon ... binibigay nila kay* Joey. *Kawawa naman 'yung kumpare ko. Nananahimik 'yung tao eh, tirahin nila nang tirahin.*" (*Mmmm.*)

CHARLIZE Theron have fun with fans at the Venice Film Festival AFP

OPENING TODAY

Chopsuey

Stars Piolo Pascual, Andrea del Rosario, Dimples Romana, Krista Ranillo

Directed by Catherine Camarillo

After the sudden death of their parents, a Chinese-Filipino (Pascual) takes over the role of dad to his three spirited sisters. Pascual had worked with Camarillo on ABS-CBN shows. She said the actor "gave his all" to the project. The story was written by prize-winner Ome Avelanoza. Shot on digital, the movie was blown up to 35mm film in Hong Kong.

Disturbia

Stars Shia LeBeouf, Sarah Roemer, Carrie-Anne Moss, David Morse

Directed by D.J. Caruso

A housebound teen voyeur (LeBeouf) suspects that his next-door neighbor (Morse) is a murderer. Says Peter Travers of Rolling Stone: "Action, suspense and flirty sex ... Cool movie." A.O. Scott of New York Times calls it an "adolescent 'Rear Window' ... more diverting than disturbing."

Day Watch

Stars Konstantin Khabensky, Maria Poroshina, Vladimir Menshov, Galina Tyunina

Directed by Timur Bekmambetov

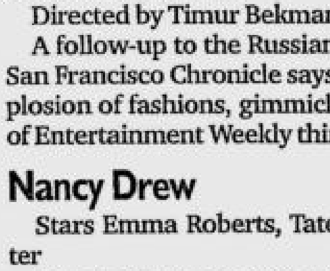
A follow-up to the Russian hit "Night Watch." Peter Hartlaub of San Francisco Chronicle says, "Art direction is original, with an explosion of fashions, gimmicks and visual effects." Greg Kirschling of Entertainment Weekly thinks it's "a wackjob headtrip."

Nancy Drew

Stars Emma Roberts, Tate Donovan, Barry Bostwick, Josh Flitter

Directed by Andrew Fleming

Julia Roberts' niece assumes the role of the teen sleuth, heroine of a series of books that first saw print 78 years ago. Lou Lumenick of New York Post describes it as "a well-written ... pleasing update." Charina Chocano of Los Angeles Times concurs: "the most radical [flick] this summer." Scott Bowles of USA Today disagrees: "it suffers from the Hollywood clichés it half-heartedly tries to lampoon."



Skinwalkers

Stars Jason Behr, Elias Koteas, Rhona Mitra, Kim Coates

Directed by James Isaac

A band of werewolves hunts down a half-breed boy who can provide the cure for their condition. Frank Lovece of Film Journal International raves: "It sparks an old-fashioned B-movie charge." Joe Leydon of Variety dismisses it as "a tepid thriller ... likely [to] disappoint genre fans."

Gretchen almost failed to attend Ogie's bash

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

GRETCHEN BARRETTO ALMOST MISSED **Ogie Alcasid**'s 40th birthday bash because her partner, **Tony Boy Cojuangco**, was apprehensive about allowing her to attend the party.

"Tony felt like it was too soon for me to party after the recent controversy," Greta explained. "He saw, though, that going to the party of a dear friend like Ogie was a must for me. So he let me go just for an hour. It made me feel good to be there."

It only goes to show that, after the storm, Greta and Tony's love has been intensified and their trust renewed. That's the way it goes when a relationship is built on solid ground.

No issue

Lucy Torres-Gomez has laughed off rumors that she's affected by the kissing scenes of her husband **Richard Gomez** with **Katrina Halili** in "Marimar."

"I'm not the jealous type. I have to understand that kissing his leading lady is part of his job," she said. "Kissing scenes were never an issue between us."

Lucy said she even gives Goma tips if she thinks a certain love scene of his seems awkward. Besides, a screen goddess like her has no reason to feel insecure at all.

Inside job

Rufa Mae Quinto is still in a state of mild shock after the burglary incident at her home. Estimated loss is P2 million.

It must have been an inside job, considering how strict security is in the ritzy village where Peachy stays. She is peeved that some people are pointing at her mom (who's still missing at press time) as the culprit, since she was reportedly soliciting money on the set of S.O.P. when Peachy was in Hong Kong.

"I provide for my mom and family so she doesn't have to resort to that. Maybe it was for something else. I'm still looking for her. I hope people will spare my mom. No matter what, she's still my mother," Peachy said.

Her ma is currently under medication for diabetes and so, sometimes, she does unpredictable things. Peachy knows that unlike material things, mothers are irreplaceable. As I always say, the best things in life aren't things.

What's amazing?

Bong Revilla's new show, "Kap's Amazing Stories," is clearly a spin-off of "Ripley's Believe it or Not." He even has a striking resemblance to the host of that show, **Dean Cain**.

Although Bong has star power, his voice lacks authoritativeness as he recites his spiels. Hence, less impact. It would be more interesting if the show would delve into local amazing stories, with Bong involved in the action instead of just showing a compilation of video clips from abroad.

Only then can the stories be truly called Bong's own. Otherwise, what's so amazing about that?

Sister act

ABS-CBN Primetime Bida presents the newest singing sensation in the land, The Jewel Sisters. Orphaned at an early age and separated by fate, an undeniable force will unite them to create heavenly music together.

The younger **Ruby** was forced to leave her sister **Emerald** at the orphanage when she was adopted by a gay reporter who gave her the name Kimberly Bautista. The elder **Sapphire** lost her siblings to a calamity and took the name Bridget Ramirez. Alone and nowhere to go, Emerald turned desperate till a musician took her in.

Watch the melodramatic twists and turns of their lives in "Pangarap Na Bituin." **Rica Peralejo, Maja Salvador** and **Sarah Geronimo** portray the Jewel Sisters. Who's gonna outshine whom?

New album

Moonstar88 offers something new in its latest album under Sony BMG, "Todo Combo." While most bands' music grows but their members drift apart, this group says its journey has grown further from being a mere music group to a family bonded with experiences on and off the road, in and out of the music scene.

Its album includes "Tadhana," "Can't Stop," "Migraine," "Panalangin," plus the Yano remake, "Senti."

Moonstar88's music is just right for cool listening under the moon and the stars.

Conviction

I am saddened by the news that **Joey Marquez** has been convicted of graft and corruption charges. Joey and I go a long way back. He really has a good heart. Too bad he was probably ill-advised during his term as Parañaque mayor.

Why doesn't the court also go after erring politicos who are in position? Are they turning a blind eye and making *kurap* to the anomalies of all the corrupt government officials around?

New endorser

FHM's sexiest for two consecutive years, **Katrina Halili** is now a proud Belo endorser. She swears by the clinic's Lipo lite and laser tenor treatment.

Isn't she wary of people who judge bombshells as having nothing between her ears?

"It's a stereotype that's not easy to erase. *Di naman nasusukat ang galing ng tao sa kaalaman niya. Mas importante ang may diskarte sa buhay,*" she says. "But those who judge me may just be *inggit. Deadma na lang ako* to them."

Doesn't it get tiring to have to look drop-dead gorgeous always? "Vanity has a price but more than just vanity, it's feeling confident that matters."

And what does the country's sexiest woman find irresistible in a guy? "Tantalizing eyes and super white teeth." All eyes are on Katrina now while some gnash their teeth in envy of her.

Quentin's girl

Here's an e-mail from **Quentin Tarantino**'s Fil-Am girlfriend **Tiffany** who got irked when her name was misspelled by another writer:

"Thank you so much for spelling my name right. I loved the article that you wrote.

I would love to do something with you one day.

Please let **Cesar Montano** know that I said the dinner was great. Quentin and I got very sick and we had to go back home together. Tiffany Limos"

Int'l artist

Catch Filipino international pianist-singer **Chris Medina** in "Romance Ala Jazz" at Tropezz Bar 2/F Greenbelt 3 on Sept 8, 8:30 p.m. (Call 0917-5226966). He was the first Filipino artist on the Love Boat Princess Cruises in the '80s, his Chris Medina Trio was a hit. Love will be in the air as he lets his piano do the talking.

Personal

Birthday hugs to my daughter **Bianchi**. My best credential is being your mom and IC's.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.